# SRIMAD RAHASYATRAYASARA

OF

## SRI VEDANTADESIKA



*Translated into English with Introduction and Notes by*

**M. R. Rajagopala Ayyangar, M. A.**
*(Formerly of the Madras Educational Service)*



*Published by:*

**Agnihothram Ramanuja Thathachariar,**
**Kumbakonam.**



[PRICE RS. 10/-

*Copies can be had of:—*

(1) **The Publisher.**

(2) **The Literary Press, Salem-1.**

THE LITERARY PRESS, SALEM-1.



SRI VEDANTA DESIKA

*Courtesy of Sri Vedanta Desika Sampradaya Sabha, Bombay.*

# PREFACE

*Srimad Rahasyatrayasara* is a classic of the first importance to the followers of Sri Vedantadesika. Though it is in Tamil, it is so full of Sanskrit words and of Sanskrit passages quoted as *pramanas* that the ordinary reader finds it difficult to understand it by himself. Since a number of my friends who have studied English told me that an English translation of it would be of great help, I suggested to Professor M. R. Rajagopala Ayyangar who is well-versed in *Sri Bhashya, Rahasyatrayasara* and other works connected with the tradition of Sri Vaishnavism and has, in addition, an intimate knowledge of English, that he might undertake the work. He complied with my request, completed the translation and handed it over to me. It is not possible for me to thank him in adequate terms for having done so.

In getting the work through the Press, I have received great and enthusiastic help from Sri K. V. Ramaswami, B. A., Assistant Secretary, Mettur Chemicals and Sri R. Natarajan, B. SC., Secretary of the Mettur Chemicals. I take this opportunity of expressing my deep gratitude to them.

I am also thankful to the Sree Vedanta Desika Sampradaya Sabha, Bombay for having kindly lent the block of Sree Vedanta Desika appearing in the book.

My grateful thanks are due to Sri K. Vasudevan Nair, Proprietor, The Literary Press, Salem who is well-known for his deep interest in everything that concerns our religion, for his ready and willing co-operation in the printing of the book in his press.

54, Ayyangar St ,
KUMBAKONAM,
1—4—1956.

*Agnihothram*
*Ramanuja Thathachariar*

# INTRODUCTION

*Life and Writings of S'ri Vedāntades'ika*

Sri Venkatanatha or Vedantadesika, to use the name by which he is more commonly known, was born at Thooppil, a village near Kancheepuram, in 1268. His father was called Anantasuri and his mother Totaramba. His maternal uncle was the renowned Appullar, whose real name was Ramanuja. It is under him that Vedantadesika learnt the Sastras. Appullar had studied Vedanta under Nadathur Ammal (Varadacharya) along with Sudarsana Bhatta, the author of *S'rutaprakāsikā*, the splendid commentary on Ramanuja's *S'ri Bhāshya*. Appullar was the great-grandson of Pranatartihara, the disciple of Sri Ramanuja, who was called Vedanta Udayana for his proficiency in Vedanta. He had, therefore, personal knowledge of Ramanuja's religious teaching and tradition.

Vedantadesika seems to have attracted the notice of Nadathur Ammal by his precociousness. Before the age of twenty, he had acquired a mastery of all the learning current in his days not only in religion but in secular subjects as well. He states that his uncle, Appullar, taught him with as much patience and care as a man would teach a parrot to speak. Vedantadesika became so proficient in the composition of poetry and in the mastery of the science of logic that he came to be called *Kavi Tārkika Simha* (the lion among poets and logicians).

Three holy places are associated with Vedantadesika's name as having been his residences. One is Tiruvaheendrapuram in South Arcot District, where, it may be presumed, he composed some of his well-known *Stotras* or hymns like *Gopāla Vims'ati* and *Devanāyaka Panchās'at* in Sanskrit and *Achyuta S'atakam* in Prakrit. He lived for many years at Kancheepuram. It is on

the chief deity in Kancheepuram that Desika composed his *Varadarāja Panchās'at* in Sanskrit and his *Attigiri Mānmiyam* in Tamil.

Srirangam was, then, the centre of Vaishnavite culture and learning and every one who had pretensions to a knowledge of Visishtadvaitic philosophy and religion made it a point to stay there as long as he could. Vedantadesika seems to have spent some years of his life at Srirangam, gathering round him a band of disciples who were greatly devoted to him. He says somewhere that he had taught Vedanta (i. e.) *S'ri Bhāshya*, thirty times over. He wrote also many treatises in Sanskrit and in Tamil in support of the Vedantic system of Ramanuja and in refutation of rival systems. It is no wonder that the title of *Vedāntades'ika* (or Vedantacharya) was conferred on him, as he himself says, by the Lord Sri Ranganatha.

Vedantadesika, or Desika, to use the shorter name by which also he is often referred to, followed the usual custom of going on pilgrimages to places in North India which are considered holy. It was probably at Tirupati that he composed his *Stotra* called *Dayās'atakam*. It is said that he visited also Mathura, Brindavan, Ayodhya and Banaras.

Desika chose to live a life of poverty. He would not seek the patronage of the great as it might lead to a loss of independence. It is said that the great Vidyaranya invited him to the court of Vijayanagar assuring him of an honourable reception. But Vedantadesika would not consent. His reply to Vidyaranya called *Vairāgyapanchakam*, which is in the form of five slokas in Sanskrit, reveals his stern and austere independence of spirit.

By his extraordinary learning and exemplary way of life, Vedantadesika won the admiration and reverence of all those who were spiritually-minded. Like Ramanuja before him, he was blessed with a long life of strenuous, spiritual activity and died in his one-hundredth year (1369).

## HIS WORKS

Sri Vedantadesika's life was dedicated solely to study, to teaching and to the composition of books and tracts. He is a voluminous and versatile writer who has left works in Sanskrit and Tamil, in prose and in verse, and also in *manipravālam*, a kind of Sanskritized Tamil. The number of his writings would come to a hundred or more and only the more important of them are briefly mentioned below.

Vedantadesika reminds one of the English poet Milton. It is well-known that Milton was a scholar in Greek, Latin and Italian, besides his own language, English. His poetry was the poetry of a scholar steeped in varied learning and a full and critical appreciation of his poems and prose writings is possible only to men of learning. With just a few exceptions, all the poems of Milton are on religious themes, as he had a lofty conception of the poet's art and mission and would not care to dally in secular writing. He wrote a drama taking his subject from the Old Testament of the Bible. Milton wrote extensively in prose also, both in English and in Latin. He was also noted for the austerity of his life, the earnestness of his religious convictions, and the stubborn independence of his character.

Sri Vedantadesika's works may be classified under the following heads :—

### SANSKRIT

1. Poetry and the Drama :

Though Desika was wholly absorbed in the study and the interpretation of Vedanta and of the religious tradition associated with Sri Ramanuja, he had in him a genius for poetic composition which could not be repressed. So, instead of writing on secular subjects, he made his muse the handmaid of religion. With the single exception of *Subhāshita-neevī*, which is a didactic poem containing gnomic verses like the *S'atakas* of Bhartrihari, all his poems have a religious background.

When he wanted to write a *Mahākāvya* like *Raghuvams'a*, he chose for his theme Sri Krishna's life and composed his *Yādavābhyudayam* in twenty-four cantos (or *sargas).* The playful activities of Sri Krishna in his boyhood and youth lend themselves easily to poetic delight. It is Desika's peculiar feature as a poet to incorporate philosophical and religious ideas even into his poems. The great Advaitic teacher, Sri Appayya Dikshitar, has written a commentary on this *Mahākāvya*.

Desika was an admirer of Kalidasa's genius as a poet and wrote a *Sandes'a Kāvya* following his manner. This is *Hamsa Sandes'a.* Sri Rama sends a message by a swan to Sita devi at Lanka where she has been imprisoned by Ravana. The first part consisting of sixty slokas describes the route that the swan should take in its journey to Lanka. The religious bias of the poet makes him speak with reverence of the holy places and shrines of South India on this route. In the second part consisting of fifty slokas Sri Rama gives a description of the state of Sita in Lanka as he visualises it in his imagination and this is followed by the message which is to give her comfort and consolation. The poem is written in the metre called *Mandākrāntā* which Kalidasa had employed with brilliant success in his *Meghasandes'a.*

*Pādukāsahasram* is a poetical *tour de force* said to have been composed in the course of a single night. The theme is the sandals of Sri Ranganatha at Srirangam and the poem has one thousand and eight slokas in varied metres and is partly in praise of Sri Rama's sandals which were taken by Bharata to Ayodhya and which are identified with Sri Ranganatha's.

THE DRAMA:

Krishnamisra, a gifted poet, wrote an allegorical drama called *Prabodhachandrodaya* on the Advaita Philosophy, wherein Prabodhachandra or *Jnāna* brings about the deliverance of King Viveka from the bondage of *samsāra* into which he had been forced by his enemies, Lust, Anger, and the like. In reply, as it were, to

this play, Desika wrote an allegorical drama called *Sankalpa Sūryodaya* in ten acts. The war is between two sets of combatants, Viveka, Bhakti, and Spiritual Serenity *(S'ānti)* on one side and Lust, Pride, Vanity and the like on the other. The hero is Purusha or the *Jīva* and the final deliverance of Purusha is brought about by the victory of Viveka over Moha with the help of Vishnubhakti.

## 2. Religious Lyrics (Stotras):

Vedantadesika has left a number of religious lyrics or *Stotras* which have won the admiration of Sri Vaishnavas so much that they are often repeated with great devotion during their gatherings. These *Stotras* or religious lyrics are mainly on the gods worshipped in Kancheepuram, Srirangam, Tirupati and Tiruvaheendrapuram. Some of them are on Garuda, the Goddess Lakshmi, the Goddess of the Earth and Goda the saintly daughter of Perialwar.

Desika is said to have been an *upāsaka* of Bhagavan as Hayagriva and has composed thirty-three slokas in His praise.

The ten *avatārs* of Vishnu are described in ten *slokas* called *Das'avatārastotram*. After the Muslim raids in the 14th century, Desika composed his *Abheeti-stava*, praying for succour to Sri Ranganatha's shrine and worshippers.

*Dayās'atakam* consists of about one hundred slokas on the Lord of Tirupati and on His mercy shown to the *Jīva* in varied ways.

*Varadarājapanchās'at*, referred to before, has fifty-one slokas in praise of Sri Varadaraja of Kancheepuram.

Desika was, for some years, a resident at Tiruvaheendrapuram where he was a staunch devotee of the god Devanatha, in whose praise he composed fiftythree slokas called *Devanāyakapanchās'at.*

Desika was a profound admirer of Sri Ramanuja whose works he studied again and again with reverance and also taught to others.

In *Yatirāja-saptati*, he has expressed his boundless admiration and reverence and also his indebtedness to Sri Ramanuja. The poem has seventy slokas.

One of the finest of these lyrics is *Gopālavims'ati* on Sri Krishna. Desika's poetic style is generally that of a scholar and is not easily understood by the ordinary reader. But in *Gopāla vims'ati*, his deep and fervent devotion has enabled him to visualise Sri Krishna and sing his praise in *s'lokas* which are lucid and delightful and can be understood even by the beginner of Sanskrit studies.

3. VEDANTA.

It is in the discussion of subjects connected with Vedanta that Vedantadesika excelled. He had studied the philosophical writings of Sri Sankaracharya and others and was a master, as has already been stated, of Visishtadvaita as taught by Sri Ramanuja. He dedicated his life, it may be said without any exaggeration, to the propagation of Ramanuja's gospel by all the means in his power. Being a subtle logician, he refuted rival systems of philosophical thought in many of his writings and established the soundness of Visishtadvaita from the point of view of *S'rutis* and of reason.

*Tatvateeka :* Sri Desika began an elaborate commentary on *Srī Bhāshyam* but left it incomplete. It is only the commentary up to the section dealing with the *Mahāsiddhānta* that is now available.

*Adhikaranasārāvali* is in 562 *slokas* and is a synopsis of *Sri Bhāshyam.* Desika had a wonderful gift of expressing philosophical ideas concisely in Sanskrit verse giving the *Poorvapaksha* and the *Siddhānta* in each *s'loka*. In this work which is in the metre called *Sragdharā*. Desika summarises the meaning of each *sūtra* and of each *adhikaraṇa* or section of Sri Ramanuja's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtras* giving, as a general rule, the *prima facie* view in the first half of each *s'loka* and the right interpretation of the *adhikaraṇa* or *siddhānta* in the second half.

*Tatvamuktākalāpā* is a controversial work in Sanskrit verse, and consists of 501 *s'lokas*. The Visishtadvaita philosophy is sought to be established as the only right system by a refutation of rival views or theories. Here again, the first half of each *sloka* expresses the *Poorvapaksha* stating concisely the tenets of other systems and the second the *siddhānta* in connection with such topics as the *Jnda* or non-sentient things, the *Jīva*, the *Nāyaka* or *Īswara* and *buddhi*, which are all *dravya* or substances and also *adravya*, those which are not substances. Desika has left also a commentary of his own on this work called *Sarvārthasiddhi*.

*S'atadooshaṇī* is a controversial treatise in terse prose against Advaita. Desika finds a hundred points of objection against Advaita, but only sixty-six of them are extant in the texts that are now available-

*Nyāya Paris'uddhi and Nyaya siddhānjanam* are treatises on logic or *nyāya* as it should be understood. They are both critical of the Vaiseshika and Nyaya schools of logic.

*Seswara - mīmāmsa* : It is generally held that Jaimini, the author of the *Pūrva Mīmamsā Sūtras*, was an agnostic who had no faith in the existence of God or Gods. In this work Desika's aim is to prove that Jaimini did believe in the existence of gods. Only a fragment of this treatise is, at present, available.

*Nyāsa - vims'ati - Nikshepārakshā, Nyāsa-tilaka, Saranāgati panchās'at, and Nyāsa das'aka* aim at establishing *Prapatti* as an *upāya* for *moksha* by refuting the arguments of those who hold that *bhakti* alone is prescribed in the *Sastras* as the means for attaining it. They describe also the manner of performing *prapatti* and the potency of the *upāya* along with the qualifications which make one competent for it.

4. COMMENTARIES :

Desika has left commentaries on *Is'āvāsyopanishad*, on Alavandar's *Chatus's'lokī* and his *Stotra-ratnam*, and on the three prose

works of *Sri* Ramanuja, namely, *Saraṇāgati gadyam, Srīranga gadyam* and *Vaikunṭa gadyam.*

*Tātparya chandrikā* is a scholarly commentary on Sri Ramanuja's *Gitā bhāshyam.* The author shows how Sri Ramanuja's interpretation of the verses of the *Gitā* is more apt and more in accordance with reason than that of other commentators.

TAMIL.

Desika has composed many treatises in Tamil, most of them being in verse. Among the verse compositions are *Attigiri Mānmiyam* already referred to and *Mummanikkovai* which is on Sri Devanatha of Tiruvaheendrapuram.

*Paramatabhangam* expounds, in Tamil verse and in highly Sanskritised Tamil prose, the doctrines of Visishtadvaita and refutes some sixteen rival systems. It is also in support of the Pancharatra Agamas and describes *Saraṇāgati* as an *upāya.*

*S'rimad Rahasyatrayasāra* is, of course, one of his greatest prose works. The Tamil prose in this work, as in others, has a large admixture of sanskrit words.

Desika has left also a large number of tracts on the proper code of conduct and observances that a good Sri Vaishnava should follow and likewise on the doctrines of Visishtadvaita.

## SRIMAD RAHASYATRAYASARA

Visishtadvaitins, who are the followers of Sri Ramanuja, consider the following as *pramanās* or sources by which knowledge is acquired:— (1) *Pratyaksha* or sense perception. Among the

The above list is by no means exhaustive. The attention of the reader who desires to have fuller information is invited to the article in *Sri Nrisimhapriya* (Vol. 12 Sanchika 9 of the year Vijaya and the month Purattasi) by Vidwan Poundarikapuram Narasimhacharya Swami, Kancheepuram and to Desika Prabhandham (*தேசிகப் பிரபந்தம்*) edited by Sri R Kesava Ayyangar and Sri Soumya Ramanujachariar and published by Sri T. Parthasarathi Ayyangar, Advocate, Devakottai.

senses or *indriyas* which provide us with knowledge are the sense of sight, the sense of hearing, the sense of smell, the sense of taste and the sense of touch. To these five should be added the mind or *manas* which perceives such internal feelings as pleasure and pain. (2) *Anumāna* or inference: Even without actual sense perception, we sometimes acquire knowledge based on previous perceptions. For instance, we have seen on many occasions that wherever there is smoke, there is fire. When, afterwards, we see smoke rising on a hill, we, at once, infer that there must be fire on that hill, though we do not actually see the fire. Inference is always based on previous sense-perception. (3) The third source of knowledge accepted by Visishtadvaitins is *s'abda* or verbal authority or trustworthy utterance. Though I have never been to London, I believe that there is a big city of that name on the evidence of those whom I consider intelligent and trustworthy. In matters of religion, this verbal authority is found in the *s'āstras.* They reveal to us what we cannot see or infer by ourselves. For instance, they speak of the existence of God, who creates the Universe, sustains it and dissolves or absorbs it into Himself. They also tell us that our souls are eternal and are now in the bondage of births and deaths owing to beginningless *karma.* They teach us also how we can get rid of this bondage. Among these *s'āstras,* the foremost place is given to the four Vedas with their crowning chapters called the Upanishads. These are called the *S'rutis.* Next come the Smritis like those of Manu, Yagnavalkya, and Parasara and also the *Mahābhārata* with its great inset, *The Bhagavad Gīta*, and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and the Puranas, and likewise, the Prabandhas of the Alvars. These *smritīs* are valid sources of knowledge so long as they do not state anything that is directly opposed to the teaching of the *S'rutīs. The Brahma Sūtrās* of Badarayana are the result of a critical examination of the *S'rutīs* in regard to what they actually teach and are also authoritative.

The followers of Ramanuja accept also the validity of the teaching contained in the Pancharatra Agamas. These *Āgamās* have come down to us from time immemorial and are held by

Visishtadvaitins to have been taught by the Supreme Being, Narayana Himself. Only some among these *āgamās* are now available to us in print like *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā, Lakshmī Tantram, Sātvata Samhitā, Poushkara Samhitā, Iswara Samhitā and Garuda Samhitā.* The followers of Ramanuja do not find any doctrine or statement in these *āgamas* which conflicts with the *S'rutīs.* Therefore they give a high place to them as to Srutis, so far as religion and spiritual life are concerned.

It is on a careful and critical examination of the knowledge provided by these varied sources of knowledge, *(pramāṇās),* that Sri Ramanuja based his system of religious philosophy called Visistadvaita. We get to know the doctrines and traditions connected with this system from his commentaries on the *Brahma Sūtras* of Badarayana called *Srī Bhāshyam, Vēdānta Deepa* and *Vēdānta-sara* and also treatises called *Vēdārthasangraha, S'araṇāgati-gadyam, Vaikunṭa gadyam* and *S'rīranga gadyam.* In regard to certain traditional beliefs and observances based on the *Pāncharātra āgamas,* Ramanuja has not left a clear and definite expression of his views. Sri Vedantadesika, who came some one hundred and fifty years after him and who was steeped in the religious lore and the religious discussions which had intervened during this period, aims at giving a clear, complete and comprehensive exposition of Visishtadvaitic thought and tradition in his *S'rīmad Rahasyatrayasāra.*

The following is a brief summary of the teaching contained in *Rahasyatrayasāra* on the more important doctrines of Ramanuja's system of philosophy and of the religious and spiritual tradition *(sampradāya)* connected with him as understood by the Northern School of Sri Vaishnavites (Vadagalais).

## TATTVA

The intelligent man who is desirous of *moksha* or deliverance from the bondage of *samsāra* or the cycle of births and deaths should know the three kinds of *tattvās* or Reals (things that exist)

and the relation in which they stand towards one another. According to Visishtadvaita, all existing things are real and none of them is a mere illusory appearance.

There are three classes or kinds of existing things or reals. (1) *Chit* by which are meant sentient beings which have consciousness, however low their level might be (2) *Achit* which means non-sentient things, which have no consciousness and which are all modifications of matter or *prakriti* and (3) *Īswara* who stands by Himself (being of different from the other two) as their Ruler and Controller.

## 1. CHIT

*Chit* is a class name or a name which indicates a group or class of existing things. By *Chit* is meant *Ātma*, soul or self. Its essential nature *(Svarūpa)* or what distinguishes it from the other two, *achit* and *Īswara*, may be described as follows:— It is different from the body, the senses, the mind, the vital breath *(prāṇa)* and intelligence *(buddhi)*. It is *ajada* or incapable of shining by itself; its essential nature is bliss or *ānanda* and *jnāna* (consciousness or knowledge). It is eternal *(nitya)*, atomic *(aṇu)* and incapable of being perceived by the senses. It is indivisible and has no parts or *avayavas*. Besides being of the nature of knowledge *(jnāna)*, it possesses also *jnāna* or knowledge as an attribute *(dharma)*. This knowledge possessed by the self is called *dharmabhūta jnāna*. The self or soul is subject to the control of Iswara *(niyāmya)* and is also supported by Him *(dhārya)*. It is *s'ēsha* to Iswara (i. e ) it exists solely for the fulfilment of His purposes and not for itself.

It was said above that the self can shine by itself. A pot, for instance, can be seen only when it is lighted up by the flame of a lamp, but the flame of a lamp shines by itself and does not require any other light to help its being seen. So also the self shines or, in other words, is felt or realised by the person without any other help. The self is also conscious of itself as when a man says 'I'.

Pain, misery and the like are due to contact with the body. This contact with the body has resulted from beginningless *karma*. The self or *ātmā* thinks that the pain is its own.

If the self is *nitya* or eternal, it may be asked what birth and death mean. The answer is that birth means contact acquired with a body; death is separation from that body.

The *s'astrās* say that the self is *aṇu* or atomic and that at the time of death, it leaves the body from the heart. Though the self is atomic or infinitesimally small in size and confined to one place, namely the heart, it is able to perceive the pleasure or the pain in every part of the body by means of the knowledge which it possesses as an attribute (*dharmabhūta jnāna*). *Dharmabhūta jnāna* or attributive knowledge is capable of contraction and expansion (*sankocha vikāsa*) and can expand and reach everywhere. The self has no parts or *avayavas* and cannot undergo change or modification (*vikāra*). In this respect it is different from *achit* or material objects like pots and cloths and cannot be burnt, cut, cooled or otherwise modified. Advaitins hold that the self or soul *is* consciousness or knowledge and does not *possess* knowledge as an attribute (i e.) *dharmabhūta jnāna*. This is wrong, for we feel that we *have* knowledge and do not feel that we are *jnāna* or consciousness alone.

Just as the self is a knower who possesses knowledge (*jnātā*). it is also a doer (*kartā*), one that wills and makes efforts and one that experiences or enjoys (*bhoktā*). It should be remembered in this connection that will which acts or puts forth efforts and enjoyment or experience are both only forms of knowledge.

The self is a doer but a doer that is ever subject to the control of Iswara. It is supported by Iswara because it can have no existence except that due to His essential nature (*svarūpa*) and His will (*sankalpa*). Taking the case of our own body and soul, the soul supports the body and prevents it from disintegrating or falling during sleep by its essential nature (*svarūpa*). During its waking

moments, the soul keeps the body from falling by its will (*san-kalpa*). So also in regard to the self as related to Iswara. It will be explained later that the soul stands in the relation of body to Iswara, who is its Inner Self.

The soul was stated before to be *s'esha* to Iswara and to exist only for His purposes. Houses, fields, sons, wives and the like are *s'esha* to a man and exist for the fulfilment of his purposes. But they can and do exist apart from him. The self, on the other hand, is a *s'esha* to Iswara which cannot exist apart from Him. It is inseparable from Him. So it is an inseparable attribute or *vis'eshaṇa* of Iswara. In this respect the self is like the body of a man in relation to his soul. The body may be defined as that which is supported by a self and is capable of being controlled by it, while existingfor the fulfilment of its purposes. In this sense the self of every sentient being is the body of Iswara.

When *Chit* is said to be a class-name, what is meant is that *ātmās* or sentient beings are many, though all of them belong to the class *Chit*. The self's or souls may belong to any one of these groups:— (1) those that are in the bondage of *samsāra* (*baddhas*) (2) those that have obtained liberation from it *(muktas)* and (3) those who are eternally free *(nityas)* (i.e.) who have never been in *samsāra*, such as Garuda and Adisesha.

Owing to contact with *achit*, (the body or mattter), the self has *avidyā* (ignorance), *karma* and *vāsanās* or past impressions, tastes and aptitudes. When contact with *achit* ceases entirely, *avidya* and the rest leave the self. The *avidyā* and *karma* have no beginning. Therefore their original cause is not to be enquired into. What is of importance is to bring about their end.

The self's, be they *baddhas muktas* or *nityas*, are innumerable.

Visishtadvaitins stoutly oppose the Advaitic view that there is only a single self enveloped in *avidyā* and that when this is realised, the self becomes identical with Brahman, that there is nothing else

but this Brahman, which is pure consciousness, and that all objects in the Universe, around, above and below us, are mere illusory appearances.

In the state of *mukti*, though souls or self's are all alike and perfectly resemble one another, yet there is difference among them capable of being perceived by themselves.

The self or *ātmā* may be defined as a conscious being that solely exists for the fulfilment of Iswara's purposes *(s'esha)*. *Achit* or matter, too, exists for Iswara but it is not a conscious being. The *Jīva* who is conscious and has intelligence is not only a *s'esha* but a *dāsa* (servant) of God.

It was stated before that the *svarūpa* or essential nature of the self *is* knowledge or consciousness and that it *has* knowledge as an attribute or *dharma*. Is there any difference between these two kinds of knowledge or *jnāna*, it may be asked. The knowledge which is *svarūpa* is incapable of contraction and expansion; it does not light up anything other than itself; it is conscious of itself (self-conscious). The knowledge which is an attribute is capable of contraction and expansion and can light up other things like pots, cloths, stars, men and so on to the self. It is capable of all-pervasiveness in the state of *mukti*, though limited in its range in the state of *samsāra* owing to past *karma*.

According to Visishtadvaita, knowledge is a substance or *dravya*, because it is the seat of action and qualities. Knowledge, though a substance, may also be an attribute or *dharma* as *dharmabhuta jnāna* is of the *svarūpa jnāna*. Attributive knowledge or *dharmabhūta jnāna* is eternal. In the state of *sushupti* or dreamless sleep, it is dormant and does not spread out and reach anything, as the senses are then inactive.

## II. ACHIT.

*Achit* or matter, in its different forms or modifications, is without consciousness or knowledge. It is subject to changes in its form *(vikāra)* though eternal as substance.

*Achit* is of three kinds :— The first kind of *achit* is called *prakriti* or matter, such as we see around us in this world. It is sometimes called also *mis'rasattvam*, because the quality of *sattvam* is mingled in it with *rajas* and *tamas*. It is *prakriti* which, by its contact with the bound self, conceals from it knowledge and bliss; it is also the cause of erroneous knowledge. As has already been said, it is eternal and is an accessory to Iswara's *leelā* or sportful activity. Sometimes it is called *prakriti* because from it, other forms of matter are evolved *(vikriti)*. It is also called *Māyā*, for it is the cause of a wonderful variety of creations.

*Mis'rasattvam* is in twenty four forms :—*prakriti* (the root cause or primordial matter), *mahat* the next stage of modification, *ahankāra*, *manas* (mind), the five kinds of subtle elements *(tanmātras)*, the five senses of knowledge, sight, smell, taste, hearing-and touch *(Jnānēndriyas)*; the five senses of action, hand, leg, speech, the organs of excretion and sex *(karmendriyās)*, and the five elements or *bhutās* viz, earth, water, fire, air and *ākās'a* (space or ether). It is by mixing these twenty-four *tattvās* of *achit* that *Īswara* creates the *anda* or world by Himself and through Brahma. There are many such *andās* or worlds, which are all within the region of Iswara's *leelā*.

The second kind of *achit* is called *s'uddhasattvam*. It is so called because it is *sattva* that is free from all admixture of *rajas* and *tamas*. *S'uddhasattvam* is a wonderful substance entirely different from the matter or *prakriti* that we see around us. It is eternal and capable of producing knowledge and bliss. By the mere will of Bhagavan and constituted of *s'uddhasattvam*, towers, palaces, assembly halls, groves, gardens and the like exist in the region of eternal glory (*nitya vibhūti* or *Paramapada*) which is

beyond the region of *prakriti*. *S'uddhasattvam* is of supreme splendour (*tējas*) and is incapable of being measured by the *muktas*, and *nityas* and even *Īswara*. Some *ācharyās* say that it is capable of shining by itself (*ajada*), while others are of opinion that it has to be lighted up by something other than itself (*jada*). Those who hold that it is *ajada* state that it shines to the *nityās*, *muktas* and *Īswara* without requiring to be lighted up by something else. But while the *jīvas* are in *samsāra*, it remains invisible to them. It is not self-conscious and is therefore *achit*. Besides it is, as already pointed out, subject to changes or modifications such as towers, palaces and so on. It is therefore *achit*.

The third kind of *achit* is Time or *Kāla*. It is in Time that the evolutes of matter (*prakriti*) undergo their modifications. Time or *Kāla* has none of the three qualities of *prakriti* (*sattvam*, *rajas*, or *tamas*). It is eternal (*nitya*) and all-pervasive (*vibhu*).

The two kinds of *achit*, *s'uddhasattvam*, and *mis'rasattvam* serve to Iswara and sentient beings *(baddha, mukta,* and *nitya)* as objects of enjoyment *(bhogya)*, as accessory instruments of enjoyment *(bhoga upakaraṇa)* and as places of enjoyment *(bhogasthāna)*. *Bhogya* is that which is experienced or enjoyed; *bhoga - upakaraṇas* are the senses which help the *Jīva* in experiencing or enjoying, and *bhogasthānas* are the various worlds (*andās*) and *nityavibhūti* and so also the innumerable bodies of sentient beings.

## III. ISWARA.

The essential nature of Iswara is Reality *(satyam)*, knowledge *(jnāna)*, bliss *(ānanda)* and infiniteness *(ānantam)*. Iswara is opposed to everything that is of the nature of a blemish. He has hosts of auspicious qualities *(kalyāṇaguṇa)* like knowledge and might. He creates the Universe, sustains it and likewise causes its dissolution. He is the refuge of all *jīvas* and dispenses to them the objects desired by them whether it be *dharma*, *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (desires), or *moksha*. He has a special and characteristic

form *(vigraha)* of His own in *nityavibhūti*. His chief queen or consort is Lakshmi; Bhumi and Neela are also His consorts.

Even as light is opposed to darkness, Iswara is opposed to everything of the nature of change (*vikāra*) or of blemish (*dosha*). He is infinite in the sense that He is eternal in regard to time, omnipresent or all-pervasive in regard to space, and has all things and all beings as His *prakāras*, modes or attributes which are inseparable from Him. He is the inner self (*antaryāmī*) of all things and of all beings. Thus He is not limited from the point of view of time, space, or objects.

It may be asked: "If Iswara is within all things and all beings, would He not be affected by their faults or blemishes?" The answer is: "No. The individual self or *ātmā* is not affected in any way by such changes as childhood, youth and old age which are the modifications undergone by the body. As in the case of the self of the individual, the inner self of all, namely Iswara, remains within, unaffected by the faults or blemishes of *chit* or *achit*.

Iswara is compact of happiness or bliss *(ānanda)* and His essential nature is light or splendour that shines. His qualities like knowledge and might are eternal (*nitya*), innumerable and boundless. He has neither equals nor superiors.

Besides *Jnāna* or knowledge and might (*s'akti,*), He has boundless compassion for *Jīvas* and infinite love to them. He is easily accessible to everyone. He is ever ready to help mortals to cross over *samsāra* and attain *moksha*. He is Himself the *upāya* for us to attain *moksha* when we are without any other *upāya* or means for attaining it.

As has been already stated, He is the cause of all the world and this is not due to any *karma* of His, but His mere will. Creation, maintenance and destruction are of the nature of sport (*līlā*) to Him; that is, they are not performed for the sake of any future

gain but for the moment's pleasure, recreation or delectation like games played by kings. "Is destruction or dissolution of the world (*samhāra*) sport to Him?" it may be asked. The answer is: "That, too, is *līlā* for him", because in the state of *samhāra* or *pralaya*, the *jīva* is given repose and rest after the sins, troubles and tribulations of life. Iswara is also the material cause of the world (*upādāna kāraṇa*). It is He that evolves into the world of *chit* and *achit*. "Does it not mean that He undergoes change? it may be asked. The answer is "No. It is *not* His essential nature (*svarūpa*) that evolves into *chit* and *achit*, but His attributes or *prakāras*, *chit* and *achit*, which are inseparable from Him and which, during *pralaya* or dissolution, lie in so subtle a state that they may not be recognised as existing at all - it is these which evolve into the world."

It may be asked:— "How can the same object or person be both the material cause and the instrumental cause? In the case of a pot, mud is the material cause or *upādāna kāraṇa* and it is different from the instrumental cause such as the potter, his wheel and his stick." The answer is as follows:- "The same object may sometimes be both *upādāna kāraṇa* (the material cause) and the instrumental cause (*nimitta kāraṇa*). Have we not seen the spider weaving a wonderful web out of the material or stuff constituting its body? Iswara, too, creates the universe with *chit* and *achit*, which are His body and which are inseparable from Him Iswara remains without change in His *svarūpa*; it is only his *prakāras*, modes or attributes, *chit* and *achit*, that change.

To *achit*, Iswara is the cause of modification: to *chit* or sentient beings, it is He that gives the body and the senses, and that awards also *moksha*.

When we find some beings happy and others unhappy, we should not charge Iswara with partiality and cruelty in creating them differently. It is on account of their past *karma* that Iswara makes them different and this *karma* is *anādi* (beginningless).

It has been stated before that Iswara has a unique form (or *vigraha*). By its nature and qualities, this form is supremely delightful; it is eternal, ever the same and pure, it is constituted of *s'uddha sattvam*. It is radiant and is of imcomparable splendour. It is supremely beautiful and enchanting and is fit to be meditated on by *Yogis*. It is enjoyed by *nityas* and *muktas* in the region of eternal glory (*nitya vibhūti*). It is from this form that the incarnations appear. Iswara is the Universal Saviour and the refuge of all. He has ornaments, weapons, attendants and the like.

Iswara is, according to Pancharatra, in five forms. (1) *Para* or Para Vasudeva, the supreme Being (2) *Vyūha* or emanations, such as are described in the Pancharatra *āgamas* (3) *Vibhava* incarnations. (4) *antaryāmī* or Harda (the inner self in the heart who controls all activities from within) and (5) *archā* or image. *Para* is the Supreme Being in Vaikunta or *nitya vibhuti* ever enjoyed by *nityas* and *muktas*. The Pancharatra Agamas call Him Vasudeva. He is the same as Narayana, Vishnu and Brahman. *Vyūha* is the emanation from *Para* into the forms of Vyuha Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha for the sake of the creation, the maintenance and the destruction of the world and for conferring His grace on those who worship Him.

In *Para* the six* qualities such as *Jnāna* are full and perfect; each Vyuha other than Vasudeva exhibits has only two of those six qualities.

Vibhavas are many and they are of two kinds:— some are principal (*mukhya*) and others secondary (*gauṇa*). Incarnations are due only to the Lord's will and not to *karma*.

The forms of the principal incarnations are not constituted of *prakriti* or matter. They retain the nature and qualities of the

* *The six qualities*: *Jnana* (knowledge): *aisvarya* (lord-ship or unimpeded activity independent of all others; *sakti* (ability or potency to become the material cause of the world; *bala* (strength, absence of fatigue sustaining power); *virya* (virility-changelessness); and *tejas* (splendour, might, the power to defeat others).

Supreme Being and are like new lamps lighted from an original one. They are fit for the meditation of those who aspire to *mukti*. Such are Rama, Krishna and the like.

The secondary incarnations are through such as are *Jīvas* like Vyasa.

The object of an incarnation is to protect the righteous, to destroy the wicked and to establish *dharma*.

The *Anataryāmī* or Harda dwells within the heart of the *Jīva*,* whatever he may be, in order to help him, in order to be meditated on by him and in order to redeem him.

*Archā* is the Supreme Being residing within the images or other objects that are worshipped in houses or temples.

It was said above that *chit* and *achit* are the body of Iswara and that these evolve into the world of sentient beings and non-sentient things during creation. This doctrine that Iswara is the inner self of all beings and of all things and that they are His body is the principal feature of Sri Ramanuja's Visishtadvaitic thought. The relation that exists between *chit* and *achit* on the one side and Iswara on the other is that between the body and the self *s'ārīra sarīri bhāva*. The doctrine is based on a passage in the *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇam* of the *Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad*, where Brahman is said to have everything in the Universe as its body and to control everything from within. The definition of body or *s'arīra* given before should be remembered in this connection.

---

*Note:* The *jiva* here means a *jiva* who can meditate.

## VISISHTADVAITA AND ADVAITA

Ramanuja's system of religious philosophy is callsd Visishtadvaita or *Vis'ishta Advaita* to dis inguish it from Sri Sankaracharya's *Advaita.* There are some passages or texts in the Upanishads which state that Brahman alone exists and that there is no second to it. Basing his system on such texts, Sankara maintains that there is only a single reality or Real, namely, Brahman. The multitudinous objects and beings which we see around, above, and below us in the Universe are, according to him, unreal and illusory appearances like the mirage and like the silver which sometimes appears as an illusion on the shell. The world that exists around us consists of sentient beings, *chit* and non-sentient things, *achit* Sankara holds that all these are illusory projections (*mithyā*) on the only real entity which is Brahman. His system of philosophy is, therefore, called *Advaita,* the philosophy which treats of the *one without a second.* Sankara states that this Brahman has no attributes or qualities by which it can be described or defined and that we can only speak of it as mere consciousness (*chit* or *Jnāna*). It is not consciousness which is conscious of anything within it or outside of it, for there is nothing else within it or outside of it. It is the only Real and nothing more can be said of it except that it is the opposite of non-existence, nonconsciousness and finiteness.

Ramanuja interprets these texts which declare the oneness of Brahman and its having no second in the Universe in a different way. According to him, Brahman is said to be the only Reality in the Srutis or Upanishads in the same way as a man who has a body and the senses in addition to his soul, or *ātmā* is said to be a single entity. In fact the passage referred to already in the *Brihadāraṇyaka Upanishad* called* *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* declares, in unmistakable terms, that the Universe consisting of sentient beings, *jīvas* and *non-sentient things* (matter) are all the body of Brahman and that Brahman is their inner self or soul.

* III 7

All sentient beings, be they gods, men, animals or plants, are the body of Brahman and, likewise, all inanimate things are its body. On the authority of such texts, Ramanuja explains the passage stating Brahman to be the only Reality as meaning that Brahman which has for its body the universe of sentient beings and non-sentient things (*chit and achit*) is the only Real. The body is an attribute or *vis'eshaṇa* of the self. So the universe consisting of *chit* and *achit* which, according to the Srutis, is the body of Brahman, is a *vis'eshana* or attribute of Brahman. Unlike Sankara, Ramanuja holds that Brahman has an infinite number of auspicious qualities and finds many passages in the Upanishads to support his view. So the Reality that the Srutis speak of is Brahman *with its vis'eshaṇas* or attributes and qualities (*chit and achit and guṇas*) All these are as real as Brahman itself and being inseparable from their inner self or soul, they are included in Brahman when it is declared to be the only Real. Ramanuja's religious philosophy is therefore called *Vis'ishta Advaita* or the philosophy that treats of the *one* Reality, namely Brahman, with all its inseparable attributes or *vis'eshaṇas* included within itself.

There is absolutely no difference between the views of the Northern School (Vadagalais) and those of the Southern School (Thengalais) in regard to what has been said so far about the three *tattvas* or Reals. It is only about *Kevalas* or *Kaivalyam* that there is a slight difference of opinion. The Southen School consider Kevalas who delight in the enjoyment of their own disembodied self without attaining the bliss of Bhagavan as being also *muktas* who are of an inferior class residing in the outermost parts of Paramapada. The Northern School maintain that *mukti*, in the true sense of the word, means the attainment of that bliss and that *kaivalyam* is not *mukti* as it is without it. If, in some treatises of ancient *āchāryas, kevālas* are called *muktas*, it is only by way of courtesy, as they are in many respects superior to other *baddhas*. Kevalas have still to attain *mukti* since they have some remnants of sin or *karma* clinging to them.

There is, however another point about which there is a divergence of views. What is the position and the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Lakshmi? Is she a *jīva*, atomic in nature like other *jīvas*, though superior to all of them? If she were considered as being equal in status to Bhagavan, would it not be against the relationship of the wife to her lord and would it not also conflict with the saying that Bhagavan is 'destitute' of equals and superiors?

The Southern School hold that Lakshmi occupies a special and unique place of her own below that of Bhagavan. She is *aṇu* or atomic and is a *jīva*. She acts as a mediator pleading to her Lord for mercy to the sinner (*purushakāra*). She is also the *s'eshī* along with Her Lord, both in *Leela vibhūti* and in *Nitya vibhūti*, and is entitled to the service of the *baddhas* in this world and to that of the *nityas* and the *muktas* in the world beyond *viz.* the region of eternal glory (*nitya vibhūti*). Bhagavan is, however, the sole *upāya* or means for the attainment of *moksha* and Lakshmi has no part in this in the same way as she has no part in the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the world.

Vedantadesika, the greatest of the exponents of the Northern School, states that Lakshmi, the inseparable attribute of Bhagavan as described in the Bhagavat Sastra or Pancharatra is in every way the object of equal veneration and worship as Bhagavan and that our worship is always to the Lord and Lakshmi. Being inseparable from Him, She participates in all His activities except in the creation, maintenance and dissolution of the world. She is *s'eshī* to all of us, *baddhas*, *muktas* and *nityās* as much as the Lord Himself. She is not *aṇu* or atomic but *vibhu* or all-pervasive and omnipresent. She is not only the mediator (*purushakāra*) interceding and pleading for the pardon of the offences of *Jīvas* but also the *upāya* along with Her Lord for the attainment of *mukti* by the *prapanna*. Our service after the attainment of *mukti* extends to her as much as to Bhagavan. Whenever Bhagavan is mentioned, we should take it that Lakshmi also is intended to be understood. Our *daivatam* or Supreme Divinity is the Divine Couple, Bhagavan and Sri, and not Bhagavan alone.

## PURUSHARTHA OR THE GOAL OF LIFE.

It is true that men strive for varied ends or objects in the course of their lives, but the wise man who realises the misery implied in *samsāra* or the cycle of births and deaths understands that the only *purushārtha* or goal that he should aspire to is *moksha* or liberation from *samsāra* *Moksha*, according to Visishtadvaita, is not merely the deliverance of the *ātmā* from the bondage of *karma* and the cycle of births and deaths, but the positive attainment of the bliss of Bhagavan in Paramapada or Vaikunta. This alone is true *moksha* or *sāyujyam*, as it is otherwise called. In religious treatises, mention is often made of the attainment by some *jīvas* of *sālokya*, of *sārūpya* and of *sāmeepya*. These are different from the true *moksha* or *sāyujya*, in as much as the happiness attained in those states is neither perfect nor eternal. *Sālokya* means the attainment of a world or *loka* which is one of Bhagavan's but is not Paramapada. *Sarūpya* means the attainment of a form resembling the Lord's as the result of constant meditation on one of these forms, (say, Rama or Krishna). *Sameepya* is the attainment of a place *near* Paramapada but not Paramapada itself. So also mention is sometimes made of '*Vibhava lokās*' and '*Vyūha lokās*'. If a man constantly meditates on any of the important *vibhavās* or *avatārs* he will attain the world of that *vibhava* from which he will afterwards have to attain Paramapada. So also with regard to the *Vyuha loka*. *Sāyujya*, which alone is *moksha* in the true sense of the word, consists in *bhoga sāmyam*, that is, the self attains, in that state, perfect happiness or bliss exactly like that of Bhagavan Himself. There may be and are differences between the activities permitted to the self in *moksha* and those that are Bhagavan's, but in regard to enjoyment or bliss, there is absolutely no difference * (*paramam sāmyam upaiti*). The love felt by the self to Bhagavan in *moksha* is so great that it overflows into service or *kainkarya* to Him. *Kainkarya* or service to the Lord is also bliss In fact it is the crowning glory or bliss of *mukti* (*Kainkarya sāmrajyam*).

* Mundaka Upanishad III-i-3

## UPAYA OR THE MEANS OF ATTAINING THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF LIFE.

How or by what means is the self to attain this bliss of *moksha?* In regard to this, there is a divergence between the views held by the Northern School and those held by the Southern.

The view held by the Northern School (Vadagalais) is stated in distinct and unmistakable words by Vedantadesika in his *Rahasyatrayasāra*. There are only two ways in which or *upāyas* by which the self can get rid of its past *karma* and attain *moksha*. They are *bhakti* or *bhaktiyoga*, as it is called, and *prapatti*, the surrender of the self to the Lord whom it seeks as the only refuge. *Prapatti* may be adopted as a preliminary way of approaching the Lord for the performance or adoption of *bhakti* or as a direct means of attaining *moksha*. In the former case, *prapatti* or *saraṇāgati* is said to be an *anga* or accessory to *bhakti*. Or it may be adopted as the primary and direct means or *upāya* for attaining *moksha*, when it becomes *angī*. So *prapatti* may be *anga prapatti* or *angi prapatti*. These terms will be explained presently. *Bhakti* and *prapatti* are the only two means for securing the grace of Bhagavan, who, being pleased thereby, grants *moksha*. *Bhakti* is otherwise called *Upāsana* or *dhyāna*. There are some thirty-two *vidyas** or forms of *upāsana* explained or indicated in the Upanishads. Constant meditation of Brahman and His attributes or qualities accompanied by the proper performance of the rites and duties prescribed in the *s'āstras*, such as *nitya* and *naimittika* for one's *varṇa* (caste) and one's *ās'rama* (stage of life), is the way or *upāya* called *bhakti*. The meditation has to be practised daily as long as life lasts. Ultimately it should attain the stage almost of actual visual perception of Brahman. To ordinary men, this *upāya* is difficult, but if it is adopted in the fulness of its perfection, all past *karma* which stands as an obstacle

* Brahma Vidyas like daharavidya, sadvidya, bhumavidya, sandilyavidya and antaradityavidya.

to the attainment of Brahman is destroyed except that part of it which has already begun to yeild its consequences (*prārabdha*) and when this too is brought to its end by the enjoyment or experience (*anubhava*) of its effects, either in this one life or in one or more future lives, the self attains *moksha*. Thus there is likelihood of delay in the attainment of *moksha* to the man who follows the way of *bhakti*. *Bhakti* is sometimes loosely employed to include bowing before *archā*, uttering the holy names of Bhagavan, singing His praise and such other acts of devotion and love. Service to Bhagavan in temples and the like is also sometimes called *bhakti*. This service also extends to the devotees of Bhagvan who are dear to him. These acts tend to promote *bhakti* but do not form *bhakti-yoga*.

*Bhakti yoga* results from seven auxiliary states of mind: (1) *viveka* which arises from bodily purity resulting from the avoidance of impure food (2) *vimoka* (freedom from desires) (3) *abhyāsa* (frequent meditation of the auspicious object) (*s'ubhās'raya*) (4) *kriyā* the performance of such rites as the five kinds of *yagna* in accordance with one's ability, (5) *kalyāṇāni* (kindness to all beings: being one in thought word and deed, compassion, freedom from covetousness, refraining from injury to others by thought, word or deed) (6) *anavasāda* (freedom from depression) and (7) *anuddharsha* (freedom from elation or undue exaltation of spirit).

Bhakti aided by these virtues results in something resembling visual perception of Bhagavan and is the cause of the last thought being turned to Bhagavan. It has three stages of development called by Sri Ramanuja: *para bhakti*, *parajnana* and *parama bhakti*.

When *karma* is said to be destroyed by *bhakti* or *prapatti*, what is really meant is that Bhagavan, being pleased with the man's devotion or self-surrender, gives up the thought of punishing him for his sins or *karma*.

*Prapatti* is also called *nyasa*, *nyasa vidyā*, *nikshepa*, *bharanyāsa*, *s'araṇagati*, and *bhara-samarpaṇam*. It consists primarily in seeking Bhagavan as the sole refuge for one's salvation and surrendering one's self to Him for salvation.

It has five *angas* or accessories which are mental attitudes:— (1) the will or determination to do what is agreeable to the Lord, (2) the avoidance of whatever is displeasing to Him, (3) *maha-vis'wāsa* or intense faith that the Lord can and will be one's Saviour, (4) Helplessness or being without the knowledge or capacity to adopt any means for saving oneself and (5) prayer to the Lord that He should extend his protection.

*Nyāsa* has to be performed only once under the guidance of the *āchārya* and it is capable of securing *moksha* at the end of this very life. *Bhakti*, it was said before, destroys all past *karma* except that which has already begin to operate (*prārabdha*). Prapatti, on the other hand, is capable of destroying even *prārabdha karma*. The central idea in *prapatti* is the thought of the man that he is incapable of performing the rites and duties prescribed in the *s'āstras* for the expiation of his sins and for the attainment of *moksha* and that, therefore the Lord should, Himself, be the *upāya* or means for the expiation of his sins and the attainment of *moksha*. Pleased with his surrender, the Lord, out of his natural compassion, pardons all the man's sins and short-comings and grants the man the goal desired by Him, *viz*. moksha. In the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, *bhakti* or *upāsana* or *dhyāna* and *prapatti* are called *sādhyopāya* or *upāya* or means which the man can adopt following the guidance of the *s'astras* and the *āchāryas*. Bhagavan is called *siddhopāya*, the *upāya* that is already present ever ready to save.

One of the finest chapters in the *Rahasyatrayasāra* is that called the *Uttarakrityādhikāra*; it prescribes the kind of life that a man should lead after the performance of *prapatti*. Bodily purity, freedom from evil throughts, the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* rites without any desire for the fruits or consequences,

goodwill to all, even to enemies who hate and revile, service to God and the devotees of God, contentment with whatever one has or whatever comes in one's way without any effort for attaining it — these are some of the virtues that the *prapanna* should cultivate. His service to God and His devotees is prompted by the mere love of it and is not due to the expectation of any reward. When one has performed *prapatti*, one gives up all thoughts concerning oneself, even the thought of attaining *moksha*, for the Lord has taken on Himself all this burden or *bhara*.

It may be asked : " It was said before that one of the *angas* of *prapatti* is the will or determination at the time of its performance to do whatever is pleasing to God and the avoidance of what is displeasing to Him. Human nature being what it is, it is just possible that the *prapanna* commits offences against the Lord, either unawares or even deliberately. If he does so, how can it be said that the performance of *prapatti* is sure to bring him *moksha* at the end of this very life ?" Vedantadesika answers this question as follows :— "In matters which cannot be understood by human reasoning, and in which the *s'āstras* are the only authority, we have to accept with faith what is stated in them, just as they are stated there. *Prapatti* is said in the *s'āstras* to have the potency of conferring *moksha* at the end of this life. The man who has performed *prapatti* is not likely to commit sins deliberately. If he commits them unawares, they will be ignored by the Lord as they were not deliberate. If he has, at any time, owing to the weakness of human nature, committed a deliberate offence, he should offer expiation (*prayas'chitta*) for it and thus obtain pardon and the *prayas'chitta* for such offences is another *prapatti*. If, however, being hard of heart, he does not choose to offer this expiation, the Lord will punish him in this very life, before his death, in some way or other for the sin committed by him. He may become blind or lame or meet with the loss of friends or relatives or become subject social obloquy. There are hundreds of other forms which the punishment might take. It is certain,

however, that the *prapanna* will have *moksha* at the end of this very life as desired by him.

Among the *prapannas*, there are two classes *driptas* and *ārtas*. *Driptas* are those that can bear the sufferings of this life until death overtakes them. secure in the consciousness that the Saviour will confer *moksha* thereafter. *Ārtas* are those who, while performing *prapatti*, beg to be relieved of this life at once, as they cannot endure separation from Bhagavan even for an instant. They, too, will have their prayer fulfilled.

Competence for the performance of *prapatti* consists, as has been already indicated in want of full knowledge of the *upāya* (*bhakti-yoga*) described in the *s'āstras* or in the incapacity to adopt it. Even if a man has the knowledge and the capacity, if he cannot endure the delay in the attainment of *moksha* which is likely in *bhakti* as an *upaya*, he is competent to adopt *prapatti*. It has to be added that *upāsana* or *bhakti* is open only to men belonging to the three higher castes; *prapatti*, on the other hand, is open to all castes and to both sexes.

The performance of *prapatti* is a rite to be gone through with the prescribed *mantras* or mysteries. There are two forms in which the rite is usually performed today. One is the rite in which he disciple is made to repeat the *mantra* of *prapatti* as dictated by the *Āchārya*. This is *uktinishṭā* in the other the disciple does not repeat that *mantra* but the *āchārya* performs it for him. This is *āchāryanishṭā*.

The reader may now ask: "In this scheme of *upāyas* for the attainment of *moksha*, if *bhakti* and *prapatti* alone are stated to be the *upayas*, what is the place of *karma yoga* and *jnāna yoga* which are described at considerable length in the *Bhagavad Gita?* Do they in any way contribute to the attainment of *moksha?*" The answer is as follows:— *Karma yoga* means the performance, by one who has understood the truth concerning the essential nature of the *jīva* and that of the Supreme Being, of such *karmas*

or rites and duties as are prescribed in the *śāstras* for one's *varṇa* and one's *āśrama* under the heads of *nitya* (compulsory and regularly recurring rites) *naimittika* (compulsory but occasional rites due to particular occasions) and *kāmya*, those which are capable of yielding certain fruits but which are not forbidden. These rites and duties should be performed without any desire for the consequences or fruits which they might be capable of yielding and in accordance with one's ability. Further any one of the following should be treated as most important, adoration of the Gods, austerities (*tapas*), pilgrimages to holy places, gifts of charity and *yagnas* or sacrifices. If duly performed, they tend to remove the sins of the *Jīva* and help to promote *jnāna yoga* and through it to create *bhakti*. They may also directly promote *bhakti*. *Jnāna yoga* is capable of helping the *jiva* to realise his self as detached or separated from the body. It leads directly to *bhakti*. Other means such as the praise of the Lord and the utterance of His holy names are helpful in promoting *bhakti*.

It should be clearly understood that *bhakti* and *prapatti* are only particular forms of *jnāna* or knowledge. So the saying *Jnānāt muktih* (*mukti* is the result of *jnāna*,) applies to *bhakti* and *prapatti*.

The devotee may be either an *Ekāntin* or a *Paramaikāntin*. He is called *Ekāntin* who prays to Bhagavan for *moksha* as well as for the good things of this life but worships no other deity. He is a *Paramaikāntin* who, while praying only to Bhagavan, does not pray for anything other than *bhakti* and *jnāna* and their fruit *moksha*.

From what has been said before, it would be clear that *bhakti*, as an *upāya*, requires certain rites and duties as aids or accessories (*angas*) and that, without them, it would be incomplete. *Prapatti*, on the other hand, does not require the performance of any such rites and duties. It is complete in itself. It has been described as resembling the Brahma missile (*Brahmāstra*) whose potency

would disappear if it were accompanied by the use of any other weapon or missile. The question would arise, "Why should the *prapanna* perform the *karmas* or rites like *nitya* and *naimittika*, if they serve no purpose in promoting the efficacy of *prapatti*?" Vedantadesika admits the potency of *prapatti* to secure *moksha* without the supplementary aid of other rites and duties, but insists that the *prapanna*, too, like the *bhakta*, should continue to perform these *karmas* or rites as they are God's ordinances or commands revealed through the *S'rutis* and *Smritis* and as their non-performance would be a violation of divine injunctions and therefore disobedience to God. By their neglect the *jīva* would incur punishment from Bhagavan.

So far we have described at some length Sri Vedantadesikar's teaching on *bhakti* and *prapatti* as *upāyas* for the attainment of *moksha* with reference to the competency for each of them, the fruit arising from each and the differences between them. It is well known that in the *Rahasyatrayasāra*, several chapters (notably 23, 24, 25, 26 and also 29) deal with controversial matter, For a clear understanding of the discussion contained in those chapters, it is necessary to have a knowledge of what the *āchāryas* of the Southern School, especially Sri Lokacharya, have said in such treatises as *S'ri Vachanabhooshaṇam* and *Mumukshuppadi* about *bhakti* and *prapatti*.

1. According to Sri Lokacharya,* *bhakti*, though described as an *upaya* in the Upanishads, is really against the essential nature of the *jīva* (*svarūpa viruddhai*) The *jīva* is the body of Iswara. He is absolutely dependent on Iswara for all that he is and does and is also His *s'esha* or *dāsa* who has no will and no capacity for action which he can call his own.

---

* He is not referred to by his name in Rahasyatrayasara.

MUMUKSHUPPADI: Tirumantraprakaranam Sutra: 21, Commentary of Manavalamamuni, Page 81, Tirukkacchi Nambidasar's Edition, Presidency Press, Madras.

Also Srivachanabhooshanam: Dviteeyaprakaranam: Sutras 115, 116, 117, 178.

Sri Lokacharya argues :— "If this is so, to adopt *bhakti* as an *upāya* would mean that the *jīva* trusts to his own endeavours and efforts for his salvation. How can a creature who has no will of his own think of depending on himself, when every thought and every movement of his are directed and controlled by Iswara?" Therefore *prapatti* alone is the means of salvation for one whose *svarūpa* is being *s'esha* to Iswara.

To this Vedantadesika replies :— "It is true that the *jīva* is dependent on Iswara for all that he is. But Iswara has endowed him with intelligence and reason, so that, as a rational being, he may use the powers granted to him by Iswara for rejecting evil and for choosing what is good. If the *jīva* is absolutely without any free will of his own, the *s'āstras* which enjoin certain things to be done by him on pain of God's displeasure would be meaningless. And the *s'āstras* do prescribe at great length *bhakti* as an *upāya*. It would be unfair on the part of the *sastras* to prescribe something for the adoption of the *jīva* if it were against his essential nature.

2. Another point at issue between the two schools is the nature of *prapatti* or what is meant by that word. Sri Lokacharya lays emphasis on the *jīva's* being the body of Iswara and on his being His *s'esha* and also on the overwhelming compassion of the Lord towards the *jīva*. He argues from these that, like a man who would cleanse the dirt on his own body without being prayed to by that body, Iswara would, of His own accord, cleanse the impurities of the self which is his body without any prayer or effort on its part. So *prapatti* is, according to him, merely mental acquiescence, on the part of the *jīva*, in Iswara's undertaking the responsibility of his protection. What is required of the *prapanna* is refraining from rejecting the Lord's eagerness to save him (* *apratishedha*) or in other words, mere receptivity. The *jīva* does not remain passive like a clod (*achit*) but is mentally aware of the Lord's mercy, of His omnipotence and of his grace which requires

* **Srivachanabhooshanam: Prathamaprakaranam: Sutra 60, Page 73 (Ananda Press Edition.)**

no cause *hetu* or effort on the *jīva's* part. In fact, considering the enormity of man's offences, how insignificant and worthless would any endeavour of his be! So the Lord's grace redeems man from *samsāra*, for He is bound to protect what is His own. Besides, He is so compassionate and his love to man so overpowering that, like the cow which licks the slime on the body of the new-born calf, He would consider even the faults, offences, and shortcomings of the self as agreeable (* *bhogya*). To a lover, the dirt on the person of his beloved is far from being hateful.

Sri Vedantadesika replies :— "The *śāstras* lay down rules and regulations for the conduct of man. They teach what is *dharma* and what is *adharma* and state that offences against the Lord would meet with punishment unless expiated. It is gross exaggeration to say that offences could ever be agreeable to God.

When a man feels that he is ignorant of what he should do for following the path of *bhakti* or is unable to adopt it owing to his weakness or inability, he seeks refuge under God, begs for His pardon and protection and surrenders his self to God to be saved by His mercy. Then God stands in the place of expiations which he is unable to perform and in the place of *bhakti* as the *upāya* for his *moksha*. Here *prāpatti* is not mere passive acquiescence or receptivity but an active mental process of seeking the Lord's refuge and praying to Him for succour. So *prāpatti* is a rite or *dharma* which has to be adopted with the help of an *āchārya*. It is true that God's mercy is boundless (*niravadhi*), but unless man who is a being endowed with intelligence, does something to deserve the Lord's grace, it will not come down on Him of its own accord. So some endeavour or effort, however insignificant it might be, some gesture at least (a *vyāja*) is required before the Lord would undertake the *bhara* or responsibility of protecting him. Further if the Lord's grace were to come to man's succour without any effort on his part, it might be asked whether it would

* *Mumukshuppadi*, Charamaslokaprakaranam Sutra 27 Page 123 Tirukkachinambidasar's Edition.

come to all without exception or only to those whom it chose. In the former case, it would mean that there is salvation for all beings and all at once (*sarva mukti*). In the latter, the grace of God would seem partial to some and indifferent to others. So a *vyāja* or gesture is necessary on man's part to become worthy of the Lord's grace and this *vyāja* is the performance of *prapatti*.

3. Another point at dispute is the question whether the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika karmas* is at all necessary for the *prapanna*, since *prapatti* is admitted by all to be capable of yielding *moksha* without any such aid. Sri Lokacharya states in his *Mumukshuppadi* * that it is no offence at all for the *prapanna* to give up the performance of these rites and duties. But, he adds, almost immediately after making this statement, that the *prapanna*, however, performs them for fear of public opinion and out of compassion to those who are ignorant, lest they too should give up their performance by following his example and thus bring ruin on themselves ‡ (*lokasangraha*). Since they are performed by the *prapanna* out of love for his fellow-human beings who are not *prapannas* and without looking upon them as *upāyas*, the Lord would feel delighted at their performance, which would, therefore, be of the nature of *kainkarya* or service to the Lord.

Sri Vedantadesika agrees in thinking that *prapatti* does not require any complementary or supplementary rites and would yield its fruit irrespective of their performance or non-performance. But the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* rites is ordained by God as a command and its transgression would bring the consequent punishment. So these rites have to be performed by the prapanna, not for *lokasangraha* or as *kainkarya*, but to avoid punishment due to disobedience of God's injunctions.

---

* Sutra 8 Charamaslokaprakaranam : Page 151 of Tirukkacchinambidasar's Edition.

‡ Sutra 85 - Page 151.

4. Sri Lokacharya enjoins great reverence for the *prapanna*, whatever may be his caste and considers it one of the greatest of offences to treat him with indifference, disregard, ill-will or contempt on the ground of his caste. Though he does not state that inter-dining and inter-marrying are proper among *prapannas*, his eulogy of the *prapanna* might lead people to think that these acts were permitted.

Sri Vedantadesika also speaks in high terms of the *prapanna's* devotion and of his being fit for *moksha*, whatever his caste. But he states that the rules concerning inter-dining and inter-marrying are based on the differences of the bodily equipment of the *jīva* and that these rules should be observed as long as the body lasts. There will, of course, be no difference in the attainment of *moksha* and there will be no such things as caste in *Paramapada*, but as long as the body lasts, the *prapanna*, too, however great his devotion to God and however pure his life, has to follow the rules and regulations of caste in social life. "The temple cow is certainly more worthy than other cows inasmuch as its milk, butter and the like are used in the service of God, but on that account, it does not cease to be a cow".

5. In addition to *prapatti*, the *āchāryas* of the Southern School consider that the love and goodwill of the * *āchārya* to his disciple who has won them by devout service to him can, of themselves, secure *moksha* for the disciple even without any *prapatti* of his. It is true that *Jnāna* is the means to *moksha*. In this case the *āchārya's jnāna* secures it for his *s'ishya*.

The controversy concerning the performance of *nitya* and *naimittika* by the *prapanna* had its origin in the interpretation of the *Charamas'loka* † of the *Bhagavad Gita*. There it is said

* Sri Vachanabhushanam: Chaturthaprakaranam: Sutras 461 & 462 Pages 360—362; Ananda Press, Madras (1908).

† Note:— "Having given up all rites and duties, seek me alone as refuge. Do not grieve, for I will release thee from all sins."
Chapt XVIII—Sloka 66.

"*Sarva dharmān parityajya māmekam s'aranam vraja*" [Having given up all *dharmas* (rites and duties) seek me as your refuge] What is the meaning of "Having given up all rites and duties?" Sri Lokacharya argues, "When it is said *snātvā bhunjeetha* ("Having bathed, one should eat") it means "first bathe and then eat". So also "having given up" means: "First give up the performance of these rites and then seek me as the only *dharma*".

Sri Vedantadesika, on the other hand, interprets the words thus: "When it is said, "Having come into this world of suffering, it is your duty to seek some means of deliverance from it," *having come* does not mean "first come into this world and then seek deliverance". It means "since you have already come into this world of suffering". So also in the *Charamas'loka*, the meaning is, "Since you find yourself unable to perform the rites and duties enjoined in the *s'āstras* for the forgiveness of your sins and the attainment of *moksha*, seek me as your refuge". The man is not asked to give them up as a condition for seeking God's protection, since he has already given them up owing to inability. Besides the performance of ordained *karma* is insisted on again and again by the Gitacharya. So it is only in the event of inability that *s'aranāgati* is prescribed.

It is because *prapatti* is clearly defined in it with its accessories and with its potency in full detail and in accordance with what is laid down in the *Pāncharātra Āgamas* that *Rahasyatrayasāra* has been called *Prapatti S'āstra.*

*Rahasyatrayasāra* is thus a handbook of Visishtadvaitic Vaishnavism as understood by the Vadagalai Acharyas. It is in four parts: the first part comprises chapters 1 to 22 and gives a detailed exposition of the doctrines of Sri Ramanuja's system or Visishtadvaitic Vaishnavism, in accordance with the traditions of the Northern School and with detailed instructions about *bhakti* and *prapatti* as *upāyas* for the attainment of the supreme goal of man; the second part (chapters 23 to 26) discusses a number of disputed points concerning *bhakti* and *prapatti* and states the

conclusions arrived at by the Northern School. The third part (Chapters 27 to 29) is devoted to an interpretation of the words and the sentences contained in the three great *rahasyas** or *mantras* which are mysteries into which the disciple is initiated by the *āchārya*. The last three chapters 30 to 32 are on the duties of *āchāryas* and *s'ishyas* and a peroration. Sri Vedantadesika shows that all the vital tenets of Ramanuja's system are contained, as it were, in an epitome in these *mantras* or mysteries. Just like the world of matter, the *jīva* is *s'esha* to the Lord and exists only for the fulfilment of *His* purposes. Since the *jīva* is besides a *chetana* endowed with intelligence, his being *s'esha* means that he is the servant of God. His service in this world extends also to the devotees of God. The ultimate goal of life is *moksha* which has, for its crowning glory, the service of Bhagavan and His consort. Man does not exist for himself and the sooner he gives up thoughts of 'I' and 'mine', the better will it be for him. The *moolamantra* states these truths briefly. The easiest and best way of obtaining God's mercy or grace and *moksha* which results from it is *s'araṇāgati* or self-surrender and this is *prapatti* which is done with the *mantra* called *Dvaya*. The *charamas'loka* explains how Bhagavan accepts the responsibility of redeeming the *jīva* when He is propitiated by *prapatti* and when the *jīva* is unable to adopt other *upāyas*.

Sri Vedantadesika wrote this treatise in Tamil with a free and generous admixture of Sanskrit words and phrases, which has been called *maṇipravālam*, for the benefit of those whose knowledge of Sanskrit is very limited. The book is, by no means, easy to understand, for the author is not satisfied with giving only a brief and broad outline of Ramanuja's system. He aims at an

* The Three Mantras:— (1) *Moolamantra* or *Ashtakshara* "*Namo Narayanaya* with the *pranavam* or the syllable *aum* preceding it. (2) *Dvaya* "*Sriman Narayana charanau saranam prapadye, Srimate Narayanaya Namah*" and (3) The Charama sloka of the Bhagavad Gita already referred to:—

"Sarva dharman parityajya mamekam saranam vraja.
Aham tva sarva papebhyo mokshayishyami ma suchah.

exposition of it in all its details and with all the references and authorities (*pramāṇas*) for what he says, so that it may be a manual of Visishtadvaitic Vaishnavism, complete and comprehensive. When he quotes *pramāṇas* in support of his statements, interpretations or contentions, Vedantadesika often gives only the first one or two words of the slokas or prose passages and of the Tamil verses of the Alwars, presuming that these texts must be familiar to the reader and need not therefore be quoted in full. At the present day, many readers are likely to be ignorant of them and cannot understand the line of reasoning adopted by the author owing to this ignorance. It is therefore, rightly the practice everywhere to study *Rahasyatrayasāra* under a *guru*. Besides these passages quoted as *pramāṇas*, the explanation of the meanings of the words and sentences in the three great *mantras* requires, for a clear understanding, at least an elementary knowledge of Sanskrit grammar. Further the author clinches conclusions arrived at after a discussion in a number of Sanskrit slokas of his own which he does not render into Tamil. The gist of each chapter is also given in Tamil verses and in Sankrit *s'lokas*, both at the beginning and at the end. These, too, add to the difficulty of understanding the text by oneself.

In this English translation, an attempt is made to minimise these difficulties. The *pramāṇas* referred to only by their first words are translated and given in full. The author's own *s'lokas* are also rendered in English. Whenever it is felt necessary, explanatory words, phrases or sentences are added within brackets to make the author's meaning clear. Occasionally longer explanations are given as footnotes. The author's interpretation of the meaning of the three *mantras* has been made as lucid as possible, though, as has been already said, a full and perfect understanding would be possible only to those who have a knowledge of Sanskrit grammar, so far at least as declensions of nouns and pronouns are concerned. It is earnestly hoped that this English translation will be of help to those who have only a meagre knowledge of Sanskrit, when they study the original under their *guru*.

It now remains for me to conclude this introduction with a grateful acknowledgement of the generous help which I have received in connection with this translation. I should not have taken up the adventure but for the suggestion and kind encouragement given by Sri Ubhaya Ve-Agnihotram Ramanuja Thathachariar Swami. His approval of the rendering of some of the earlier chapters was heartening and, after the completion of the work, he took upon himself the entire responsibility of getting it printed and published.

My grateful thanks are due to Sri K S. Patrachariar, M. A., whose eminence as a scholar in Sanskrit and in English has been the admiration of all his friends and acquaintances. He read through the manuscript of the introduction with great patience and made a number of valuable suggestions for its improvement. I should like to express my respectful gratitude also to my *guru*, Sri Ubhaya Ve-Sinnamu Srinivasa Patrachariar Swami of Kumbakonam, under whom I studied *Srī Bhāshya* and *Srīmad Rahasyatrayasāra*. He was kind enough to hear me translate the introduction orally into Tamil and to correct several errors that had crept in.

I consider myself as having been lucky in having sought the assistance of my esteemed friend, Sri G. K. Rangaswami Ayyangar, M A., before giving the manuscript to the press. As a devout admirer of Sri Vedantadesika, he gave me unstinted and enthusiastic co-operation in making the translation as free from errors and defects as possible. Having studied the original under the late Chetlur Mahamahopadhyaya Narasimhachariar Swami, he has a good mastery of the subject and by close scrutiny and unsparing criticism, he drew my attention to inaccuracies in the rendering and to the omissions of even single words left untranslated by oversight. He assisted me also in the laborious task of reading the proofs. It would be presumptuous on my part to think of thanking him for all that he has done.

## BOOKS CONSULTED

Sri Bhashya : Rahasyatrayasara : Sri Lokacharya's Tattvatraya. Sri Vachanabhooshana, and Mumukshuppadi with the commentaries of Sri Manavalamamuni : Yateendramata deepika (of Srinivasadasa) : P. Otto Schroder's Introduction to *Pāncharātra* and the Ahirbudhnya Samhita : Ahirbudhnya Samhita : Sri T. Rajagopalachariar's Vaishnavite Reformers of South India" (G. A. Natesan and Co ). The commentaries of Chetlur Narasimhachariar Swami and Saraswadini.

# CONTENTS.

## PART II.

*Discussion and clarification of doubts and disputed points:*

## PART IV

*The Path of Spiritual Tradition.*

## The pronounciation of Sanskrit words printed in italics in the body of the translation of the text.

| | Vowels<br>Devanagari | Should be pronounced as the vowel or consonent sound in the English word |
|---|---|---|
| *a* corresponds to | अ | up |
| *ā* | आ | father |
| *i* | इ | hit |
| *ī* | ई | see |
| *u* | उ | put |
| *ū* | ऊ | too |
| *ri* | ऋ | — |
| *e* | ए | came |
| *ai* | ऐ | fine |
| o | ओ | code |
| *au* | औ | crowd |
| | Consonants | |
| *k* | क | kitten |
| *kh* | ख | — |
| *g* | ग | go |
| *ñ* | ङ | thing |
| c or *ch* | च | chit |
| *ch* | छ | — |
| *j* | ज | join |
| *jn* | ज्ञ | — |
| *t* | ट | tin |
| *t* | ठ | — |
| *d* | ड | good |
| *n* | ण | turn |
| *t* | त | path |
| *th* | थ | — |
| *d* | द | then |
| *dh* | ध | — |
| *n* | न | name |
| *p* | प | pit |
| *ph* | फ | — |
| *b* | ब | bet |
| *bh* | भ | — |
| *s'* | श | — |
| *sh* | ष | shine |
| *s* | स | sin |
| *h* | ह | He |

# SRIMAD RAHASYATRAYASARA

## A BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF

## THE SUCCESSION OF ACHARYAS

———:———

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :*

(With due devotion) we repeat the expression of adoration to our *gurus* and likewise to their *gurus* ; and among these (latter), we pray for the grace of the Primeval Couple (Narayana and Lakshmi), the twin *seshis** of all the worlds (so that they may be both the end to be attained by us and the means of attaining it).

*TAMIL VERSE :*

Having carefully studied the beautiful hymns sung with delight in Tamil by seers, we have come to understand the real meaning of the regions of the Upanishads which are otherwise difficult to comprehend - seers known as Poygai Muni, Bhutamuni, Peyalvar, Kurugesan (Nammalvar) who was born on the banks of the cool Tamraparni, Vishnuchittan, the pure-minded Kulasekhara, our Pananathan, Thondaradippodi, the splendour that appeared in Mazhisai ( Tirumazhisai alvar ) and the prince of Mangai armed with sword and spear for making bright the path of the Vedas throughout the world.

*TAMIL VERSE :*

To those who venture to attain release from the bondage of *samsāra*, the ancient path indicated to us by the spotless Madhurakavi

---

* A *sesha* is one who exists solely for the purposes of another. That other is *seshi.*

Note: (1) The commentator says that Vishnuchittan stands for Vishnuchittan and also for his daughter Andal, the authoress of many hymns.

by his own example is the only safe [2] path, for while there is Sri Krishna, the great cowherd, who incarnated solely for the sake of his devotees to confer bliss on them, to be their refuge, to be their final goal, to stand in relation to them as mother, father, brother and so on, to change their desire for the pleasures of this world into a desire for Himself, to remove all their sins, to show them infinite compassion, to reveal the truth, and so also to bring about in them a likeness to Himself — while there is Sri Krishna ever ready to do all this, [3] he sought only the feet of the sage Satagopa *(Nammālvār)* who rendered in Tamil the truths contained in the Vedas which are otherwise hard to understand.

### *THE ĀCHĀRYA ESSENTIAL FOR MOKSHA:*

It is said in the *Smritis*: "Kshatrabandhu* [1], who was the worst of sinners, and * [2] Pundarika, the virtuous — both of them obtained *moksha* or release from bondage by virtue of their having *āchāryas*." It is thus declared that in the case of every one, the only means of securing *moksha* is to have an *āchārya*. To the man desirous of *moksha*, the line of *āchāryas* is stated in the *S'ruti* [3] to extend upward even to the Supreme Bhagavan for purposes of meditation.

Note (2) *safe path:* This means *Bhakti and Prapatti* which lead to *moksha*. *Acharya bhakti* is called *bhakti* and *prapatti* as it leads to them.

Note (3) Madhurakavi in his decade of Tamil verses, says that, to him, Nammalvar is the only God and that through him, he expects to derive all the benefits that men expect to have from God Himself. The path indicated by him is that of devotion to the *Acharya* for attaining *mukti* as well as other things.

* 1 Kshatrabandhu led the life of a highwayman in a forest. He was a source of terror to the sages who lived in that forest. Once when the sage Narada happened to pass by him, he rushed at him with his stick. Narada took pity on him and asked him to find out from his wife and children whether they would share the sin he was committing, as it was done for their sake. They refused and Kshatrabandhu realised his folly and begged to be instructed by Narada in the truths of religion.

* 2 Pundarika was a virtuous Brahmin, who, though he followed the righteous path and went on a pilgrimage to holy places, did not get a vision of God. It was only after being initiated into the *Ashtakshara* by Narada that he realised God.

3 The *sruti* referred to here means :— "This line of the acharyas extends up to Bhagavan thus: This is his acharya; his acharya is so and so and so on up to the Lord".

*BHAGAVĀN THE FIRST ĀCHĀRYA:*

The Supreme Lord is the foremost of all *āchāryas*, as may be seen from the following passages :— "Him[1] (Sri Krishna) who is possessed of all excellences, who is the *āchārya*, father and *guru*", "Narayana[2] who is the *guru* of all the world is also my *guru*", "Thou[3] art my kinsman, and Thou art my *guru*", and "Thou art[4] the *guru* of all the worlds and likewise their goal". It is He that, at the beginning, vouchsafed the Vedas to Brahma and when they were stolen, brought them back to him and through him spread their knowledge in the world. It is He that blessed Brahma's sons, Sanatkumara and others, to understand[5] all truths by themselves and to follow the path of renunciation. Through them He revealed the means of attaining salvation. It is Bhagavan who, later by the agency of such great seers as Narada, Parasara, Suka and Sounaka, maintained intact the tradition of the Upanishads. It has been said "Know[6] that Vyasa who is otherwise called Krishna Dvaipayana is the Lord Narayana Himself. Who else is there in the world, O Maitreya, that could compose the *Mahābhārata?*" It has also been said, "Devoutly[7] uttering the name of that great sage (Vyasa), Bhishma said with folded hands". Into such great men as Vyasa referred to above the Lord entered and through them published to the world great works like *Mahābhārata* and *S'ārīraka Mīmāmsa (Brahma Sūtras).* Further in such incarnations as Hamsa, Matsya, Hayagriva, Nara, Narayana, and the *Gītāchārya* (Sri Krishna), He himself stood out and revealed spiritual truths and also the means of attaining *moksha (tatva* and *hita).* He had his invaluable teaching confirmed also

1 Mahabharata; *Sabha Parva*: 41—21. *Acharya* here means one who teaches Brahma Vidya and *guru* one who teaches the Vedas. This verse was spoken by Sahadeva to those assembled at the Rajasuya sacrifice.

2 Vishnu Purana 5 : 1—14.

3 Mahabharata : Gandhari's words.

4 Alavandar's *Stotram*: 60.

5 Mahabharata : *Santi Parva*. 349—71.

6 Vishnu Purana : 3 . 4—5.

7 Mahabharata: *Adi Parva;* 114—40.

through the words of such men of wisdom as Bhishma. It has been said [8] "Narayana Himself dictated the whole of the *Pāncharātra* ". When this *S'āstra* which was originally taught by Him became lost, once again at the end of the Dvapara *Yuga* and the beginning of the Kali *Yuga*, He [9] revealed it again through Sankarshana in accordance with the ordinances of the Satvatas so that all castes, Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, might, after initiation by the *āchārya* with the prescribed marks *(S'ankha* and *Chakra)*, worship and render service to the lord in the performance of their daily duties with their minds set on the Eternal. As is said in the following verse, " In the yuga of Kali [10], the Lord Achyuta enters into the respective persons of men already born and carries out His designs ", Narayana assumed a new series of ten incarnations in the forms of Parankusa (Nammalvar), Parakala (Tirumangai) and others. In these ten *avatārs*, just as clouds take in the water of the ocean and then pour it down in the form of rain so essential to the life of every one, the Lord gathered together those parts of the Vedas which are most significant and revealed them briefly in a language (Tamil) which is accessible to every one.

When this path of spiritual life was threatened with obstruction by heretics, open and covert, He incarnated again in the land of Agastya in the forms of many teachers of the true doctrine. Has it not been said, " The god,[11] Narayana, Himself, assumes a mortal form out of compassion and lifts up the world submerged (in the darkness of ignorance) with the sastras as His hand ", and so also, " Our[11a] Lord dressed in his yellow raiment came as the *guru* out of compassion to impart the teaching of the Veda ". In reference to this, the Maharshi, Suka, says, " In the[12] *yuga* of Kali, devotees of Narayana endowed with spiritual greatness, will

8 Mahabharata : *Santi Parva :* 359—68.

9 Mahabharata : *Bhishma Parva* 66—39—40.

10 Vishnudharma : 108—50.

11 Jayakhya Samhita.

11a Perialwar : Tirumozhi 5—2—8.

12 Bhagavatam XI. 5—38, 39.

be born here and there in large numbers in the land of the Dravidas, where flow the rivers, the Tamraparni, the Vaigai, the Palar, the holy Cauveri and the Mahanadi which runs westwards."

### *THE SUCCESSION OF VAISHNAVITE ĀCHĀRYAS.*

Among these *āchāryas*, Nathamuni was the son of Iswaramuni, and he gave us "Nyaya Tatvam" and "Yoga Rahasyam." Since Nathamuni received the sacred tradition from one of the spiritual descendants of Madhurakavi, and was blessed with spiritual wisdom from a study of *Tiruvoymozhi* and since, in his yogic contemplation, Nammalvar appeared to him and taught him the sacred lore, his *āchārya* was Nammalvar himself (though they lived at different times). Nathamuni's son was Iswara Bhatta To Iswara Bhatta was born Alavandar (Yamunacharya). The works of Alavandar are the following eight:—"*Āgama Prāmāṅyam*", "*Purusha Nirṅaya*", the three *Siddhis*, namely, "*Ātma Siddhi*", "*Īswara Siddhi*", "*Samvit Siddhi*", "*Srī Gītārtha Saṅgraha*", "*Stotram*" and "*The Tetrad of Slokas.*" Sottai Nambi was the son of Alavandar. Sottai Nambi's son was Ennachchan. Ennachchan had four sons, one of whom was Pillayappar. Pillayappar's son was Thozhappar. Thozhappar had two daughters The chief disciples who sought the feet of Nathamuni were eight:— Uyyakkondar, Kurukaikavalappan, Nambi Karunakara Dasar, Erutiruvudaiyar, Thirukkannamangai Andan, Vanamadevi Andan, Uruppattur Achan Pillai and Sokattur Alvan. Uyyakondar had five disciples; they are:— Manakkal Nambi, Tiruvallikkeni Pan Perumal Araiyar, Settalur Sendalangarar, Sri Pundarika Dasar and Ulagapperumal Nangai. The chief disciples of Manakkal Nambi were five; they are Alavandar, Deivattukkarasu Nambi, Gomatam Tiruvinnagar Appan, Siruppulloor Avudaiya Pillai and Acchi. Alavandar had fifteen disciples· they are:— Peria Nambi, Tirukkottiyur Nambi, Tirumalai Andan, Alavandar Alvar, Tirumalai Nambi, Isandan Deivavari Andan, Siriyandan, Tirumohoor Appan, Tirumohoor Ninrar, Deivapperumal, Tirumangai Aliyar, Pillai Tirumalirun-

jolai Dasar, Maraner Nambi and Alkondi. Six disciples sought the feet of Perianambi; they were :— Emperumanar (Sri Ramanuja), Malaikuniya Ninrar, Arya Sri Satagopa Dasar, Aniarangattamudanar, Tiruvoykulamudaiyan Pattar and Tirukkacchi Nambi. Sri Ramanuja learnt the meanings of the *rahasyas* or mantras at the feet of Tirukkottiyur Nambi. He studied *Tiruvoymozhi* at the feet of Tirumalai Andan. He learnt *Tiruvoymozhi* at the feet of Alavandar Alvar and learnt also "*Stotram*" and the ancient tradition from him. At the feet of Tirumalai Nambi he studied the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Sri Ramanuja's writings are nine in number: *Srī Bhāshyam, Deepam, Sāram, Vedārtha Saṅgraham, Srī Gītā Bhāshyam, S'iriya Gadyam* (Sriranga Gadyam), *Periya Gadyam* (*S'araṇāgati Gadyam*), *Vaikunta Gadyam* and *Nityam*. The names of the chief disciples of Ramanuja may be learnt from the respective tradition of each reader.

*BHAKTI TO ĀCHĀRYA ESSENTIAL:*

It has been said, "The wise[1] man should bring his *guru* to the light (of renown) and should guard the sacred *mantra* with great care: from the omission to bring his *guru* to light and by revealing the *mantra*, he declines in wealth (of knowledge) and in age (spiritual standing)" His bringing the *guru* to light and his omission to do so, it needs no saying, are due to the excess or deficiency of his devotion to his *guru*.

From * *Kata S'ruti* and † *Jābāla S'ruti* it is well-known that that all desired knowledge arises from supreme devotion to the *guru* resembling that to Bhagavan. This is learnt also from the incident of Sanjaya seeing all things as if they occurred before

1 Seshasamhita: 14–50

* NOTE: *Kata Sruti*: This wisdom concerning the soul cannot be obtained by the mere exercise of reason. Only when it is imparted by another (the *guru*), does it lead to the knowledge which is the means of attaining *moksha*. *Katopanishad* 1. II. 9

† *Jabala says in the Sruti:* "It is only the *Vidya* or wisdom learnt from an *acharya* that gives proficiency" Chandogya Upanishad: IV–9–3

him, as the result of his supreme devotion to his *guru* Vyasa. From the episodes of Raikwa (and others) it is evident that the *guru* who does not reveal spiritual truths immediately even to those *s'ishyas* who are of excellent character will not be adversely affected in his spiritual life. If, on the other hand, the *guru* reveals these spiritual truths to any and every disciple in the belief that the *s'ishya* who has sought him must be good, he will be adversely affected; for, in such cases, it is said that the sins of the disciple become also the sins of the *guru*. This may be seen from the story of Brahma. Without careful enquiry (into his fitness) he revealed truths to Indra. As a consequence Brahma forgot his divine knowledge and had to be taught again by Bhagavan through the agency of Narada, Brahma's very disciple. In the *s'loka* referred to above, the meaning that, by not bringing the *guru* to light and by improper bringing of the *mantra* to light, the man suffers decline *respectively* in wealth and in age is primarily intended owing to appropriateness and the support of Jabala and Kata Srutis. There is nothing wrong in interpreting the *s'loka* as meaning also " He who omits to bring his *guru* to light and brings the *mantra* to light will suffer decline *both* in wealth (the wealth of spiritual knowledge) and in age (spiritual standing)." It follows from this that a man should bring his *guru* to light by way of the overflow of his supreme devotion to him under all conditions and that the sacred *mantra* should not, for the sake of any material advantage, be revealed to the fickle-minded who do not possess all the qualities prescribed for a disciple. If the *mantra* is revealed to undeserving persons, its great value which is like that of a casket made of rubies containing a precious jewel will suffer and the *guru's* spiritual greatness will also be adversely affected. The word *guru* refers, by implication, to the earlier *gurus* also in the line of ascent extending up to Bhagavan. Or it may mean *gurus* in general. Similarly the word *mantra* refers also to the meanings of the *mantra* and other secret doctrines connected with it. As a rule or *vidhi*, it has been laid down that, whenever a man meditates on these secret meanings or mysteries, he should also meditate on the lineal succession of *gurus*. It has also been said: " As

an [13]expiation for having conversed with those that are forbidden as unfit (for conversation), we should meditate on the virtuous." By the words "the virtuous", this *sloka* refers primarily to the *āchāryas*.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

"Having sought the protection of my *guru* who has graciously taught me that Bhagavan is the Inner Self within me and having also bowed with devotion to the line of his *gurus*, I seek the refuge of the feet of the Lord, after bowing at the feet of that generous soul who appeared in Sri Perumbudur owing to his compassion (for his fellow-men), (his *guru*) Peria Nambi, Alavandar (the *guru* of Peria Nambi, Manakkal Nambi, Uyyakkondar who taught the good path (of *prapatti*) to Manakkal Nambi, Nathamuni (the *guru* of Uyyakkondar), Satagopan (Nammalvar) (the *guru* of Nathamuni) and Senainathan (the *guru* of Nammalvar) and then, of the gracious Lakshmi, sweet to the Lord as ambrosia.

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

May these great spiritual teachers, Nathamuni and others, fill my heart here and now with delight, so that I may not be subject to the impact of the arrows of Manmatha (i. e. to the pleasures of the senses)—teachers who bring us blissful truths of varied kinds from Vedanta, who convey to us (like Bhagiratha) the celestial river of the compassion of the divine couple to be sought in full faith and who are foreign to the paths of envy, error and deception!

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

The blissful line of our *gurus* who are possessed of many auspicious qualities, who have brought down the arrogance of rival controversialists by the successive neighs issuing from Hayagriva who delights in sitting on the throne of their hearts, and whose triumphant banner fixed at the top of the mansion of the four

13 Goutama Dharma Sutra: 9.18

quarters has, by the flourish of its cloth waving in the breeze, dispelled the doctrines of their respective systems like tufts of cotton and thereby rendered the good path clear to all — this blissful line of our *gurus* shines supreme.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

We that cling to the noble qualities and sweet words of the benevolent sage, Ramanuja, who adorns the world with his renown and who, like an elephant, knocking down plantain trees, refuted the arguments of those that, with the help of their unrestrained logic, wrought great havoc in the straight paths of the * *Brahma Sūtrās* — we (that cling to his words) and are thereby blessed with spiritual fervour shall no longer (even) think of deeds that are evil.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

We, who were caught up in the stream of *samsāra* from time immemorial, and have, now, by a change of fortune, come to acquire a knowledge of our true spiritual nature, consider that Sri Yamunacharya (Alavandar) came into this world to protect us from being sunk again in the mire of *samsāra* and we will ever be attached to the feet of the sage (Alavandar) who triumphed over his opponents and blessed us with his writings. Never more shall we read the works of heretics.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

We shall come to new life again by bowing every day at the feet of the noble and generous Nathamuni, who to his (two) § loving disciples who were like a trumpet and a conch (to proclaim the truth and to cow down the exponents of rival systems) taught the art of music so that they might sing the sweet strains of the Tamil

NOTE:— The disputations of these *acharyas* are compared to the succession of neighings coming from the God Hayagriva who is seated in their hearts. By these disputations they are said to have put down the pride of the exponents of rival systems.

* (*or the Upanishads*)

§ Two disciples: Kilagathalvan and Melagathalvan.

Veda which had been long forgotten in the world and who propagated in the world, for the pursuit of all, the path of *tapas (bhakti and prapatti)*. In all the four regions of the world there is no one equal to us (because of this devotion of ours to Nathamuni).

---

NOTE: There are some who maintain that this chapter on the succession of *gurus* is not part of *Srimad Rahasyatrayasara* and that the latter begins only with the "Introductory Chapter", which follows.

## (1) INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

I adore the regular and spotless succession of Acharyas which is well-known to extend upwards even to Bhagavan. It is by virtue of their grace that the essence of the meaning of the three secret *mantras* (mysteries) abides in my mind.

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

I bow to those great men who have refuted the arguments of men *that chop logic and ask, "Why and wherefore?", in connection with (the truths of) the *s'astra* which treats (in two parts) of *karma* and Brahman. They have thereby rendered clean the highroad that leads to the Lord of Hastigiri.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Lucky indeed are we in having an opportunity, in this world and every day, of meditating on the three mysteries (*mantras*) with great delight — secrets which were taught to us with great earnestness for the removal of our dense ignorance by great souls endowed with compassion who sought the feet of the Spouse of the lotus-born Lakshmi as their sole refuge and gave me also those feet for our protection.

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

Though the *Jīva* is ever dear to the Lord (Souri) like the gem Kaustubha, he fails to obtain the paramount supremacy of service (to the Lord) owing to his ignorance; but being favoured

NOTE:— It is said by some that this *sloka* pays homage to the author's uncle Appullar who established the importance of *bhakti* and *prapatti* by refuting the arguments of opponents in his writings. There are others who hold that there is a reference to Desikar's teacher under whom he studied *Tiruvoymozhi* and who is known to have swept the streets clean during the procession of Sri Varadaraja at Kancheepuram.

* *logic choppers* like Tarkikas

with His glance at a turn in the tide of fortune, he attains to a knowledge of his real nature (as one entirely dependent on God and existing only for Him ). This becomes possible by virtue of the teaching imparted to him by his *gurus* and thus he succeeds in saving himself.

### *THE HERITAGE OF THE JĪVĀTMĀ.*

*How the Jīvātmā lost this heritage.*

The individual soul (Jivatma) has been declared in the different *sāstras* as being dear to the Lord of Lakshmi even like the gem Kaustubha; he has been called the prince, the Lord's son, His disciple, His attendant, His dependant existing solely for Him *( *s'esha* ) and His servant. The Lord is his *s'eshī* for whose purposes (alone) he exists by his very nature. The Lord is the ruler of the eternal Suris, who are ever free from ignorance. He is possessed of unsurpassed auspicious qualities; He loves us as He does the lotus-born Lakshmi. He is the Lord of men on earth and of the Suris in Heaven. As has been said "❀ The Lord of the Universe dwells in the Supreme Region of Vaikunta along with Lakshmi," "†Thou art ever with Lakshmi adorned with shining bracelets". He dwells in the pure world of *s'uddhasatva* ( *nitya vibhūti* ) along with His great queen and is seated on a couch, as described in such places as the *Koushītakī Brāhmana*, in a hall of splendour which is lit up with gems and stands on a thousand pillars, in the eternal and changeless city called by names like Ayodhya; for instance, it is said, "‡It is called Ayodhya and Aparajita and is beyond the world of *svarga*." The Lord is seated on the bed of the serpent called *S'esha* who is like § an umbrella to the Lord when He moves about and like a throne whenever he is seated. He has been described "as the ¶Lord's abode, His bed,

*NOTE:— A *Sutra* or aphorism in *Purva Mimamsa* says: "That is called a *sesha* which serves the purpose of another (and that other is called a *seshi*) (e. g.) In a sacrifice, the grains of rice are *sesha* to the sacrifice which is *seshi* because they serve the purpose of the sacrifice.

❀ Lainga Purana

† *Tiruvoymozhi*: 4, 9, 10

§ *Mudal Tiruvandadi*: 53

‡ *Srigunaratnakosa*: 23

¶ Alavandar: *Stotram*

and His seat." Sesha, the serpent, is ever bent on serving the Lord in all places, at all times, and in all situations and enjoys rendering service of all kinds in varied embodied forms. As he is thus fulfilling the purposes of the Lord and has no other aims in life, he is, indeed, a real and unconditional *S'esha* and the name *S'esha* fits him in every way. The Lord shines on the bed of *S'esha* as the Supreme and ever-youthful Sovereign of Heaven. It is His gracious desire that all souls should enjoy His blissful state and attain their goal. The *Jīva* is thus entitled, by his essential nature, to the service of His Master as his birthright in as high a degree as the eternal *Sūris* themselves who have the endless bliss of serving Him. But sunk in the sleep of beginningless Maya, he has fallen into the wilderness of matter (*prakriti*), has had repeated births in quick succession, has lost the primary aim of existence, has found no comfort or consolation, has lost the splendour of his real nature owing to evil desires and passions and is without a true knowledge concerning *tatva* (that which should be known for salvation and *hita* the means of attaining it). Well has it been said, "$ Trudging along the many thousand pathways of *samsāra* consisting of cycles of births and deaths, he has become deluded and exhausted and is covered with the dust of tendencies left by impressions in the mind."

*The parable of the prince brought up by huntṣmen.*

The condition of the *Jīva* in *samsāra* has been aptly described in the following parable:— A certain king went out a-hunting with the women of the harem and was keenly absorbed in the sport. The little prince lost his way even before he knew who he was and was brought up in a hamlet by tribesmen who found him wandering about (helpless). As he grew older, he identified himself with the people who brought him up and thought that he, too, was a savage tribesman, learnt their language as if it were his own and, like their own sons, ate their food and lived their life. Without knowing anything about the enjoyments, the

$ Vishnu Purana : 6 - 7 - 10

code of conduct and the traditions of his birth, he found his good and his evil, his joys and sorrows, in extremely gruesome things totally different from enjoyments befitting a prince. Though there were some wise and sage-like men who knew him as a prince, he was not accessible to them and lived like a savage without even the means of being born in a better life after death, owing to life-long savagery due to erroneous notions. The story is told of two parrots born of the same parents. One of them was brought up by holy men and the other by tanners who ate cow's flesh. The former said, "I was brought up by sages and he was brought up by tanners. I hear, every day, the speech of the sages and he hears the speech of tanners. You have yourself seen the difference between my speech and the speech of the other bird. Goodness and wickedness are the result of (good and bad) association (respectively)".

Such was the condition of the prince who lost his real character and acquired a different nature. Similar is the state of the *Jīva* who, by identifying himself with the body, loses his real character and assumes a different nature. In the case of the prince (of the parable) some generous benefactors who were aware of his real birth (in a royal family) made up their minds to save him (from savagery) by some means or other. They removed from his mind his false identification of himself with the tribesmen and by discipline and training, physical and spiritual, enabled him to become gradually fit for princely enjoyments and the means of attaining them. They made him realise, both by precept and by example, what befitted him as a prince in matters connected with character and conduct and thus rendered him capable of hating the mean and gruesome enjoyments of savage life and created in him the power of discrimination by which he could choose and prefer the supremely refined aims and enjoyments of his princely station.

Vishnupurana: 2-13-98

*The applicability of the parable to the Jīva.*

In the same way, some generous benefactors who are introduced to the *Jīva* by parents and the like help him realise that "the soul is neither God nor man nor beast nor tree, and that these differences of body and shape are due to *karma*." They enable him to understand that the soul is different from the body and adopt the proper means to make him pursue the goal or aim suited to his essential nature and to follow the path that would lead to it. They create in him qualities and modes of conduct found in men endowed with the splendour of wisdom and not in men who are so absorbed in their bodies as to forget their soul and they bring him to a position in which he is capable of distinguishing between what should be rejected and what is worthy of adoption. Now in the parable, on seeing for themselves the prince's innate fitness, the transformation wrought in him by some worthy men and his intelligence, some teachers being directed by the Supreme Master who is all compassion and being themselves highly compassionate appear before him and reveal his true parentage to him as also what is highly desirable to one in his station and the means of attaining it. It has been said, "God's love, good deeds done by chance, the gracious glance of God, freedom from hate, willingness to learn and the conversation of good men — these are six causes that lead to the acquisition of an *āchārya*." Those good men in the parable would strive in every possible way to bring about a longing for re-union in (the mind of) the prince and the king. So also with the *Jīva*. His *gurus* reveal to the *Jīva* the intimate relation existing between him and Narayana, the Lord of Lakshmi, who rules with His sceptre the earth surrounded by the * turbulent ocean and the world of Vaikunta without even the least exception. Do not the *s'āstras* say, "The soul is neither God nor man, neither beast nor tree. Its essential nature is knowledge and bliss and it is entirely dependent on the Supreme Being and exists solely for His purposes (*S'esha*)" and again, "The souls are indeed the servants by nature of the Supreme †Being?" These *gurus*

* *Nachiar Tirumozhi:* 11 - 3

† *Mantrarajapadastotram*

try earnestly to help the *Jīva* attain the Lord and feel that his attainment of the glory of *moksha* would give them as much delight as the sovereignty of Vaikunta (*Nitya vibhūti*) and of the whole earth (*līlā vibhūti*). They have as much love to him as the cow to its calf on the day of its birth when, out of loving kindness, it gives it milk. So with the help of words, neither excessive nor defective, they desire to remove his ignorance, his doubts, and his erroneous notions. As stated in the *s'loka*. "He § who teaches the truth concerning *cit* (sentient being) *acit* (non-sentient matter) and Iswara and their essential character etc.", they (the *gurus*) teach him the true nature of the Lord who is the ruler of sentient and non-sentient things that are ruled by Him, of their respective character and of their mutual relations to one another, of enjoyment or experience in *samsāra* (including *svarga*) and of release from that bondage and of the respective means for attaining them (one to be rejected and the other to be adopted), of the routes by which the soul travels to its destined abodes and of the obstacles, expressed and unexpressed, that stand in the way of salvation; for these are matters that should be known to every one desirous of release.

All these things that should be known to every *mumukshu* are found concisely stated in 'the three mysteries or secrets' (*mantras*) which are, as it were, the quintessence of all passages treating of the Jiva and Iswara and which contain the best part of all the main doctrines.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

We that deserve a place near the heart of Vishnu even like the gem Koustubha which rose from the sea along with Lakshmi at the time of the great churning, we that are competent to wear, on the crown of our head, the flower-like feet of God, were in peril of being swept away by the current of the stream of *karma* which caught us up even while in our mother's womb, when, fortunately

§ Alavandar: *Stotram*

for us, certain great souls proficient in the knowledge of the five things that ought to be understood and likewise of the subtle doctrine that the relation of the Jivatma to the Lord is that of the body to the soul, came to us out of compassion to save us from being lost (in that stream).

[NOTE:— *Koustubha*: This gem is stated in certain treatises to stand allegorically for the *Jiva.*]

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

In the cycle of *karma*, *avidyā* and others which succeed one another, as in the revolution of a wheel, in the varied streams of *samsāra* peculiar to each individual and beginning from time immemorial, all systems of religious thought declare that, when the proper time comes, there is varied fruition resulting from past *karma*. At the time of this fruition, the Lord, who is the first *Āchārya*, finds his opportunity, catches the Jiva and bestows His grace on him. Such Jivas are indeed rare and they become the repositories of all forms of wealth (like discrimination and freedom from desires) extending up to the sovereignty enjoyed by the freed souls in *moksha* (*viz.*, the enjoyment of Bhagavan and service to Him).

---

[NOTE:— *and others*: The word *others* refers to *vasanas* or impressions left in the mind in previous births, *ruchi* or tastes and aptitudes and *prakriti sambandha* or association with matter.]

## (2) THE CHAPTER ON THE DETERMINATION OF WHAT IS BEST?

NOTE :— " The Three Mysteries " have been occasionally referred to in previous chapters. Sri Vedantadesika presumes that everyone of his readers knows what they are. It is just possible that some of them are not in the know of these mysteries. So a brief account may be necessary of these *mantras*.

1. One of them is called *Ashtakshara* or *Tirumantra*. It consists of eight syllables in Sanskrit which are in the form of three words. The first word which consists of a single syllable is *Om*, which is made of three parts *a*, *u* and *m* or *akara*, *ukara* and *makara*. The second word is *namo* which, when there is no *sandhi*, is *namas*. It means 'Obeisance' or adoration! The third word is *Narayana* which means " to *Narayanaya* ". *Narayanaya* is the dative (the fourth case) singular form of *Narayana*. The *mantra*, as a whole, means " Adoration to Narayana ! " or " I offer my adoration to Narayana." (This is the meaning appearing at first sight.)

2. Another *mantra* or mystery is the " last " sloka of Sri Krishna's teaching in *Bhagavad Gita* usually called the *charama sloka*.

It means : " Having given up rites or activities as means to secure *moksha*, surrender thyself to me alone ". (This is the first half of the *sloka*.)

" I will free thee from all sins ; despair not " (This is the second half of the *sloka*.)

3. Yet another mystery or *mantra* is usually called *Dvayam*. It consists of two parts ; the first part means " I seek refuge at the feet of Narayana who is ever inseparable from Sri or Lakshmi ". The second part means : " I offer my adoration to Narayana and Sri ".

These, then, are the " three mysteries or *mantras* " which are the best of what should be known and meditated upon. The fuller and more subtle meanings of these *mantras* are explained in latter chapters. )—*Tr.*

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :*

What is opposed to the way of the Vedas is like poison ; even in the *S'rutīs* or *Vedās*, those parts which treat of the means of attaining the enjoyment of material goods *(Prakriti bhoga)* and

of the enjoyment of one's own *ātmā* or self *(purusha-bhoga)* or *(Kaivalya)* are not salutary. Therefore the wise who are afraid of the cycle of births and deaths *(samsāra)* seek the best essence extracted out of the ocean of nectar called the Upanishads which has been guarded with great care by sages (i.e.) previous *āchāryas* for our benefit.

### *THE GREAT VALUE OF THE THREE MANTRAS:*

Among these three mysteries *(mantras)*, *Tirumantra* or *Ashtākshara* has[1] been stated to contain everything within itself and, if it is known, the meaning of everything becomes known; the *charama s'loka*, which says (in its first half) "having given up all rites and activities as means of attaining *moksha*, surrender thyself to me", establishes that the adoption of the single means taught in it, *viz*, self-surrender (or *s'araṇāgati)* would secure the benefits of all other means prescribed elsewhere; the *Dvayam*, as has been stated in *Kata s'ruti* and elsewhere, is capable of making a man perfect in the discharge of all his duties even if it is uttered only once. Therefore these three mysteries alone are of value to the seeker after salvation. It has been said, "One should ignore what is of no value, what is only of slight value, and, likewise, what is valuable and even what is more valuable. It is only what is most valuable that one should prefer in the *s'astra*, like ambrosia in the ocean.

### *THE ONLY PRAMANA IN REGARD TO MOKSHA AND THE MEANS OF ATTAINING IT IS SASTRA:*

The ultimate goal or aim of life (*purushārtha*) (namely, *moksha*) and the means of attaining it are not capable of being understood from sense perception (*pratyaksha*) or (*anumāna*) inference. As stated in such passages as "It is from the

1. Naradiya Kalpa 1—9.

[2] *S'āstra* that I know Janardana", "Therefore [3] in determining *what *ought to be done and what ought not be done*, the only authority that should guide you is *S'āstra*" and "He who is well [4] versed in the *Āgamas* or *Vedas* will attain *Brahman*", the only *pramāna* that exists for our guidance is *s'abda* or what is revealed in the *S'āstras*. In this context it has been said, "What are[5] to be known are many and endless; the time (at our disposal) is short; the hindrances are many; therefore prefer only what is valuable, like the swan that separates the milk from the water with which it is mixed." The word 'valuable' really means 'most valuable', because it refers to what is always and unconditionally valuable. The Sastras of those who are outside the pale of the Vedas (like Buddhists) and likewise of heretics (like Advaitins) are not valuable at all and are therefore to be ignored. In the first part of the Veda, the portion which treats of rites leading to the attainment of worldly goods is only of very slight value and hence not to be resorted to. That part which treats of the attainment of the good things of *svarga* after death, though it may appear valuable to some as leading to fruits higher than worldly goods is of no use, as, in the final estimate, they are based on sorrow and have other objectionable features. That part, too, which treats of the realisation of one's own soul and the means thereof, though a little more valuable, is not of value to those who desire the enjoyment of the Supreme Self. To the man of discerning wisdom, the part of the Veda which treats of the Supreme Brahman, the attainment of Brahman and the means thereof is the most valuable, and is therefore to be preferred.

---

NOTE :— 2. Mahabharata : Udyoga Parva : 68–5.

3. Bhagavat Gita : 16–24.

4. Mahabharata : Santi Parva: 276–2.

5. Uttara Gita : 3–10

* (Alternative meaning): "what should be attained and what should be rejected (see Tatparya Chandrika: Gita: XVI: 24)

*THE THREE MYSTERIES ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT.*

Even there, the three Mysteries *(mantrās)* which are, as it were, an epitome of the truths that ought to be known and of the means of attaining salvation, which are the distinctive, unique and exclusive doctrines (of our Visishtadvita system) are invaluable and therefore to be most preferred. As stated in the *s'loka* "From the many and great *s'āstras*, the wise man should choose only that which is most valuable as the bee takes in the honey from the flowers," the *jīva* who thirsts for *moksha* should prefer as invaluable these three mysteries *(mantrās.)*

*TAMIL VERSE:*

As if what has been already learnt is not enough, the eighteen subjects of study may confront us like burdens (on the intellect); but they add only to the number (and are of no use). Therefore the *Āchāryas* of our system *(Vis'iṣṭādvaitam)* have, with wise discrimination, given us what the *Nitya-sūris* whose wisdom never languishes (literally 'who never wink') speak of in exalted terms. namely, the 'eight' (Ashtakshara) and the 'two' *(viz)* the *Dvayam* and the *charama s'loka.*

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

The basic *mantra (moolamantra)* called *Ashtākshara* shines conspicuously in the Upanishads (*literally*, the end of the various branches of the Veda). If there is any one endowed with discriminating wisdom who has understood from that *mantra* the truth about his essential nature, and if he spends all his time in uttering the *Dvayam* which, even at a single utterance, can produce the fruition of the desire for the ultimate goal of life and if he has also absolute faith in the means of salvation taught with compassion in the *charama s'loka* by Sri Krishna who, for his sport or *līlā*, became the charioteer, and, who is the crest jewel, as it were, of the Vedas - if there is any such person (at all) in the world, he will be the leader of all our hosts.

6. Mahabharata: Santi Parva 176 - 66.

# 3. THE CHAPTER ON THE MOST IMPORTANT AND DISTINCTIVE DOCTRINE THAT IS UNIQUE TO VISISTADVAITA.

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

When Bhagavan is seen in the mirror of the * *Vyāpaka mantras,* which disclose His all-pervasiveness, one will see that the universe (which we perceive with our senses) is absolutely dependent on Him for its existence and continuance and likewise for its activity and the fruit or result arising from it; since the universe is supported and controlled by Him and is also solely for the fulfilment of His purposes, one will understand that it is the body of the Primeval Creator. By realising this relationship of the universe being the body of the Creator, one is enabled to reach the heart of the Srutis, which were not composed by any one and which have the deepest significance.

## *WHAT IS MEANT BY PRATITANTRA? THE MEANING OF S'ARĪRA - S'ARĪRI BHĀVA:—*

The word *Pratitantra* means a doctrine or feature which is peculiar and distinctive to a certain (philosophical or religious) system exclusive of all others. Here it may be asked what the doctrine that is most important and unique to our system of Vedanta is. It is the doctrine which maintains that the relationship between Iswara and the world of sentient beings and non-sentient things is that between the soul and the body. (Another is the doctrine that every word, whatever its ordinary denotation may be, such as 'cow' "man" and the like, refers ultimately to Iswara who is within them as their innermost soul).

---

NOTE :— * Vyapaka mantras: These are (1) *Ashtakshara* (2) *Shadakshara,* the *mantra* with six letters (*Namo Vishnave* with *Pranava* at the beginning) and (3) *Dvadasakshara,* the *Mantra* with twelve letters (*Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya* with *pranava* at the beginning.)

*WHAT IS A S'ARĪRA AND WHAT IS A S'ARĪRĪ:*

Iswara is called the inner self or soul *(S'arīrī)*, because as long as they exist, He is, in regard to sentient and non-sentient substances *(dravya)*, their support *(ādhāra)*, their controller or ruler *(niyantā)* and their Lord or Master *(S'eshī)* for whose purposes they exist. Sentient beings and non-sentient things form His body, since, with regard to Him, they stand as substances supported by Him, controlled by Him, and existing solely for the fulfilment of His purposes, throughout their existence. Iswara is called the Supporter and the Controller or Ruler of all sentient beings and non-sentient things, because from His *swarūpa* or essential nature and His *sankalpa* or will, they derive their existence, continuance and activities as * befitting each of these two *(svarūpa* and *sankalpa)*. It may be asked how this could be. Just as Iswara is the abode, *ās'raya* or *ādhāra* (support) of the attributes which define His essential nature *(svarūpa viz. Satyam, Jnānam, Ānandam* and the like) and of the other qualities possessed by Him with His essential nature so defined (qualities like compassion and accessibility), He is also the inseparable and direct support, *(ās'raya* or *ādhāra)* of all substances (sentient and non-sentient) other than Himself. He is also the support, through these substances ((i.e.) indirectly), of the qualities that pertain to them. There are some who hold that Iswara is the support, through the *jīvas*, of the bodies supported by the *jīvas*. Some Acharyas say (on the other hand) that both directly by His essential nature and indirectly through the *jīvas*, He is the support of these bodies.

*ISWARA'S SUPPORT BY HIS SVARŪPA AND BY HIS WILL.*

In relation to Iswara, all (substances), sentient and non-sentient, are attributes that are inseparable from Him (*Aprithak*

NOTE * :— As befitting each of these two :— By His *svarupa,* He is the cause of their existence and continuance. this is being their support; by His *Sankalpa* or will also, He is the cause of their existence, continuance and activities; this is being their controller.

*siddha vis'eshanas*). Therefore their existence and the like depend entirely on the existence of their support (i. e.) Iswara. The existenee of all things is also dependent on His will. Those of them that have only a temporary existence take their origin from a temporary will or *sankalpa* of His and those of them that are eternal (like Vaikunta and the *sūris*) exist for ever by His eternal will. This distinction has been stated by one who is worthy of respect for his learning in the (following) *s'loka* :— "The [1] existence of all things is only by Thy will. Of these some are eternally dear to Thee and are hence eternal and even these eternal beings or things are entirely dependent on Thee for their essential nature."

Since the continuance of a thing is merely the continuity of its existence, everything, (i. e.) existence and continuance, is dependent on His will. There are heavy substances that are stated in the *s'āstras* to be supported by Iswara's will. For instance, the following *s'loka* says :— "The Heavens,[2] the sky with the moon, the sun and the stars, the different quarters, the earth, the great ocean — all these are supported by the might of the Supreme Being, Vasudeva." It is stated here that, in regard to keeping these heavy things in their respective places without their falling away from them, the existence, continuance and activity of these things depend on Iswara's will. The word '*supported*' (in the *s'loka*) means 'is dependent on His will'. If it be asked how, when every substance is supported by His will, the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Iswara can have anything to do with them, the answer is that the will of the Supreme Being ordains that these objects should be supported by His essential nature (*svarūpa*). Thus all things are dependent on Iswara's essential nature and also on Iswara's will. In the world (of daily life) also, we find that the body is supported by the essential nature *(svarūpa)* of the soul or self and also by the will of the self. Since the body exists from

1. Vaikuntasthavam : 36
2. Mahabharata : Anusasanika parva 254–136.

the time of the entry of the soul into it and perishes or disintegrates when the soul leaves it, it is known to be supported by the *svarūpa* or essential nature of the soul. In the state of dreamless sleep *(sushupti)* and the like, when the will of the self is dormant, the body continues to exist without any deterioration; so its existence then is clearly dependent on the *svarūpa* of the self and not its will (or *sankalpa).* In the waking state, when the body is kept from falling, it is sustained by the will or *sankalpa* of the soul. When the existence of the body is dependent only on the *svarūpa* of the self or its essential nature, it is said to be supported *(ādheyatva)* by the latter; and when the existence depends on the will or *sankalpa* it is said to be controlled and directed by the latter *(niyāmyatva).*

### *WHAT IS THE MEANING OF S'ESHA-S'ESHI BHĀVA?*

Iswara is said to be the *s'eshin* of all things, because they exist solely for the fulfilment of His purposes. They are His *s'eshas.* The following *s'loka* explains how Iswara is is the *s'eshin* of all:— "The [3]utterance of the Upanishads is to the effect that the Lord takes in both sentient and non-sentient things for the fulfilment of His own purposes, by being the cause of their existence, their continuance and their control. In regard to (one of the two (i.e.) the sentient being), Thou art both the end to be attained *(upēya)* and the means of attaining it *(upāya).* This is Thy essential nature and not an adventitious quality of Shine. Therefore, O Thou that hast Thy repose in Srirangam, I seek refuge in Thee without any selfish interest."

### *THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE.*

Sentient beings and non-sentient things exist not for their own sake but for the fulfilment of God's purposes. Their nature is ever to exist for somebody else (i.e.) the Lord. In using them for His own purposes, His glory is manifested. This is being

3. Srirangarajastavam: (Uttara Satakam) 87.

*S'eshī.* "But" it may be asked, "what does this sentient being gain by being supported and controlled by Him and by existing solely for his master?" The answer is as follows :— By having the Lord as his *ādhāra*, the *Jiva* becomes an inseparable attribute of the Lord even like His own attributes, *Jnāna* and *s'akti* or power. By being the Lord's *s'esha* and by having the Lord as his *s'eshī*, the *jīva* acquires a taste for an ultimate goal or end which is appropriate to his essential nature, for every being aims at a goal or end suited to the conception held by it about its nature. By being the *s'esha* of the Lord and by having Him as his controller and ruler, he comes to know the specific means or *upāya* (*viz* Bhagavan) of attaining the goal or ultimate aim suited to his essential nature. This *upāya* or means (is the Lord Himself who is the only proper means for the attainment of this end and who) does not require any auxiliary aid for helping Him. From what has been said above, it follows that this sentient being has no other support, exists for no body else, and has no other protector than Bhagavan.

## *THE PRESENCE OF THESE IDEAS IN THE THREE MYSTERIES OR MANTRAS.*

If it be asked how this idea is contained in the first mystery (i.e.) *ashtākshara*, the answer is as follows :— The word 'Narayana' is a compound word which means either "*He to whom Nārāh are a resting place* (*ayana*)", in which case it is a possessive adjective compound (*bahuvrīhi samāsa*), or "the resting place of *nārāh* (i.e.) men", in which case, it is a determinative compound in which the first part *Nārāh* is in the genitive case (i.e.) *nārānām + ayanam* (which is qualified by the genitive.) The compound word *Nārāyaṇa* interpreted in these two ways establishes His being the support (of everything) and of His pervading it. From this it would follow that the *jīva*, in his essential nature, has no other support and is pervaded by no other than Narayana. The words *Om* and *Namo* which precede *Nārāyaṇāya* imply that the *jīva* exists for Narayana and is entirely dependent upon Him

for protection. It would follow therefrom that the *jīva* serves no other purpose than that of Narayana and that he has no other refuge or protector than He.

In *Dvayam* which is, as it were, a gem of a *mantra* and which discloses the activity or process of self-surrender (*prapatti*) to the Lord, the first part reveals that the *jīva* has no other refuge than Narayana and the second that he exists for no purposes other than those of Narayana, while, in both parts, the idea of the *jīva* having no other support (*ādhāra*) is evident (from the word Narayana).

Similarly these ideas may be discerned in the *charama s'loka* also, either directly and explicitly in the words themselves or by implication or purport arising indirectly from the meaning of the words.

The *charama s'loka* declares that Bhagavan is Himself the already existing and established means *(siddha upāya)* for attaining Him, for He is ever ready to help us to attain Him, and that, in order to secure His help, we have yet to accomplish or adopt a means *(sādhya upāya)*, which is self-surrender *(s'araṇāgati)* to the lord This *sādhyopāya*, namely, self surrender or *s'araṇāgati* is performed by uttering the *dvayam* and the thoughts that we should bear in mind at that time are concisely disclosed in the *Tirumantra* or *Ashtākshara* as in a little mirror reflecting bigger forms.

The (two) meanings of the first word *OM (aum)* are illustrated in Arjuna's chariot and in the (famous) *s'loka* [4]of the *Rāmāyaṇa* which says:— [4]"Rama went first. Sita walked in the middle, and Lakshmana, bow in hand, walked behind, following them. The word *OM* is constituted of three parts *a*, *u*, and *m*; *a*, which is seen first, means Bhagavan, the Protector or Saviour, who is seen first in Arjuna's chariot, and *m* means the *jīva*, Arjuna, the object of protection who is seen afterwards; *u* means, only; it may also

4. Ramayana; Aranya kanda.

mean Lakshmi. When *u* refers to *S'rī* or Lakshmi, the two *s'eshis*, Bhagavan and *S'rī* appear first and the *s'esha* appears afterwards. In the *s'loka* quoted from the *Rāmāyaṇa*, first we think of the Saviour, then we think of Lakshmi and then of Lakshmana who is their *s'esha*. So also is *praṇava* or *aum*; *a*, *u* and *m* refer respectively to the Saviour, Lakshmi who pleads for the *jīva* and then the *jiva* who requires their protection. The second word in *Tirumantra*, *viz*. *namo* or *namah* means "adoration" or "I adore". This brings out explicitly, by the word itself, the idea of the *jīva* being entirely dependent on the Lord. Since Bhagavan is pleased with those who serve His devotees *(Bhāgavatās)*, it is implicitly stated in the word *namas* that we depend also on Bhagavatas and are subject to their direction and control. Illustrations of these may be found respectively in the lives of the devotees, Bharata and Satrughna (the former of whom delighted in obeying and serving Rama and the latter in obeying and serving Bharata).

The third word in *Tirumantra* is *Nārāyaṇāya*, which is the dative or fourth case of Narayana. (The word Narayana has two meanings: (1) the resting place or refuge of *naras* or living beings) and (2) He who has *naras* (living beings) as His abode or resting place. This means that the *jīva* depends for his very existence on Narayana and that Narayana's glory *(vibhūti)* cannot manifest itself without the *jīva*. It has therefore been well said: "I do [5]not exist without thee, O *Nārāyaṇa*, nor dost Thou without me". *Nārāyanāya*, which means 'for Narayana' should be construed along with some such word as *syām* or *bhaveyam* and the meaning would then be, "May I exist for Narayana"! These meanings of the word Narayana may be seen illustrated in all created beings of Kosala (who could not bear their existence without Sri Rama and who departed this world along with Him, and in Sri Rama, too, who departed with them.

The first word, *Praṇava (aum)*, signifies that *m*, the *jīva*, exists only for *a (āya)* and the second word *namo* that the *jīva* depends on *Bhagavān*. His existence is for Bhagavan and His

5. Nanmukan Tiruvandadi: 7

devotees, to the latter of whom the *s'eshatva* extends as its ultimate limit, and he depends absolutely on Bhagavan and His devotees. In the light of this interpretation, the third word *Nārāyaṇāya* has, for its purport, the goal of the *jīva, viz., kainkarya* or service to the Lord and His devotees. This service may be seen illustrated in an active form in that of Lakshmana and in a passive form in the sandals * of Sri Rama which were an incarnation of Lakshmana or Adisesha and which left Rama's feet to go along with His devotee, Bharata. (In these instances) the service is such as would be pleasing to the *s'eshī (namely*, Bhagavan).

All this elucidation and illustration of the meaning of Tirumantra were vouchsafed by Sri Appullar. The implicit and explicit meanings contained in *Dvayam* and the *Charama s'loka* should be understood on the same lines.

### *IN REGARD TO BEINGS ENDOWED WITH INTELLIGENCE, S'ESHATVA MEANS DĀSATVA:*

In these mysteries Iswara is disclosed as the *s'eshī* (i e.) as one for whom everything else exists. He stands in the relation of a *s'eshī* to both sentient beings and non-sentient things in common. In relation to non-sentient things He is *S'eshī*, because they exist for His purposes. In relation to sentient beings or *jīvas* endowed with intelligence, He is *s'eshī* in the special sense of being *Swamī* (i.e.) Master whom it is their duty to serve, and this is the manner in which we should understand while uttering the *mantrās*. Our being *s'esha* to the Lord we share in common with non-sentient things but we are *s'eshas* in the special sense also of being His servants (*dāsāh*).

The ordinary relationship of *S'esha* and *S'eshin* between the *jīva* and Bhagavan is disclosed in the first syllable of the *Ashtākshara, viz. aum* where the *a*, the first member, is in the dative

NOTE :— Lakshmana is a partial incarnation of Adisesha and Adisesha serves the Lord as His sandals, His bed, and so on. Therefore the sandals of Rama are, in a sense, the incarnation of Lakshmana.

case *āya*, though the termination has dropped. It means 'for *a* or Bhagavan'. The specific form of being *s'eshas* which applies only to *jīvas* (and not to non-sentient things) and which is really being the servants of the Lord (*dāsas*) and of His being the *Swamī* or Master is revealed in the purport or implication. So also in the word 'Narayanaya' there is the general relationship of the *s'eshin* towards all things and the specific relationship of *Swamī* or Master which obtains in the case of *jīvās*. Here the goal of usefulness to the Lord, which is the result of the general attitude of the *s'esha*, becomes the goal of service or *kainkarya* to the Lord, owing to the *jīva* being His servant or *dāsa*. Thus by being the *s'eshin*, Iswara attains a unique glory and as a consequence of His being the *Swamī* or Master, this glory consists in the enjoyment of service which is His *purushārtha*. Iswara is responsible for the protection of His servants and has also the power to do so, whereas the *jīva* or *Chetana* is not responsible for his own protection nor has he the ability to protect himself. This is due to Iswara being the unconditional (*nirupādhika*) *s'eshī* and the unconditional Director and Ruler. Owing to their being the unconditional *s'eshas* and their being subject unconditionally to His control, it becomes, indeed, the responsibility of the owner to protect what belongs to Him and of the strong to protect the weak. Iswara, however, makes up His mind to protect the *jīva* only after making him adopt some means or *upāya* for winning His protection, (because the *jīva* is subject, according to the *S'āstra* to the law of *Karma*).

*TAMIL VERSE:*

The Lord gave us our existence and is our support (*dhāraka*) as well; He is also the unconditional Ruler that directs and controls us. There is nothing that does not exist for the fulfilment of his purposes; He is also our Master for whom all things exist; He stands alone with no one to compare with Him. It is the earnest conviction of those who understand the spirit of the Vedas that we are the bodies and the unconditional (or natural) servants of the

Lord with the crown of *Tulsi* leaves (for the *Antaryāmi Brāhmana* of *Brihadāraṇyaka upanishad* states this explicitly.)

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

If, in the Kali yuga, there is any one supremely wise who can understand this unique and distinctive doctrine of the relationship between Iswara and the world being that between the soul and the body, which was taught by that sovereign *sannyāsin* (Sri Ramanuja) and which is like the dawn that dispels the darkness of ignorance—then in that place where he is, the tumultuous waves of logical disputation arising from the eagerness to establish the truths of other systems will subside at once.

# 4. THE CHAPTER ON THE FIVE THINGS THAT SHOULD BE KNOWN TO EVERY SEEKER AFTER SALVATION.

---

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

In the 'a' in *Om* and in the word '*Nārāyaṇa*' occurring in *Ashtākshara*, the supreme end of life (i.e.) Bhagavan, who is opposed to all that is objectionable or faulty, is indicated; in the *m* in *om* and in the part *nāra* occurring in *Nārāyaṇāya*, the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the *jīva* who is to attain this end is disclosed; the means of attainment already existing as established (*siddha upāya*) namely, Bhagavan, is indicated in the part *ayana* occurring in *Nārāyaṇa* and the means to be accomplished or adopted (*sādhya upāya*), which is self-surrender, is in *namas*; the fruit desired, *viz.*, the enjoyment of Brahman which includes also service to Him is disclosed in the dative or fourth case in *Nārāyaṇāya*; the hindrance to it, namely, the feeling of 'mine' is in the word *mama* occurring in *namah* (*na mama*). He who understands the *Ashtākshara mantra* that reveals all these five and **Dvayam* too, which is to the same effect—he will be considered by all as one who knows everything.

## *THERE IS NO REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO SPEAK OF FIVE THINGS AND THOSE WHO SPEAK OF SIX.*

In the words *Nārāyaṇa* and in *om*, the relationship between Iswara and the *jīva* is revealed as that between the soul and the body. Having taken this relationship as the foundation or basis of the Visishtadvaita system, some investigated the five truths that should be known to every one who desires *moksha*. Others took this relationship also as one of the things to be known and hence spoke of the six things to be known. If it be asked what the five

---

NOTE:— * *Dvayam* may mean also the two (i.e.) *Dvayam* and *charama-sloka.*

things are that should be understood by the seeker after *moksha* along with the relationship itself, the answer is as follows:— "The nature[1] of "the end to be attained" *viz.* Brahman, the nature of the individual self who is the seeker of the attainment, the means of attainment (*upāya*), the fruit resulting from it and so also the hindrances to the attainment of Brahman - all the Vedas with their (elucidatory) *itihāsās* and *purāṇās* speak of these five."

### *BRAHMAN, THE END TO BE ATTAINED: ITS SVARŪPA:*

Among these, the essential nature of Brahman, which is the object of attainment, is revealed in the first letter *a* in *om* and in the word '*Nārāyaṇa*' in *Tirumantra* and in the words *Nārāyaṇa* with the adjectives '*S'rīmān*' occurring in *Dvayam* and in the words 'me' and 'I' occurring in the *Charama s'loka.* It is in this way that they should be considered. While doing so, one should think of His essential nature (*svarūpa*) as infinite *jnāna* and infinite bliss ever inseparable from His consort, Lakshmi, who, in every form and in all situations, participates in all His actions. For there are many authoritative passages in support of this prescribed contemplation:—

"The Lord of the [2]Universe is ever with Lakshmi in Vaikunta, the world beyond" (Here the reference is to the Supreme Lord (*Para*) in Vaikunta.)

"This [3]Narayana is always with Sri — Narayana whose abode is the ocean of milk. He has now come to the city of Madhura leaving His bed (Adisesha)" (The reference is here to the *Vyūha*) "Thou[4] art the God Narayana, the spouse of Sri and hast the Chakra as Thy weapon and Thou art omnipresent". (The reference is to the *Vibhava* or *avatāra.*)

1. Harita Samhita.
2. Lingapurana.
3. Harivamsa: 113-62
4. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda 120–13.

"Bhagavan has the [5]mole, Sri Vatsa, on His chest and Sri is with Him eternally." "Lakshmi is [6]ever inseparable from Vishnu." "He (Lakshmana) [7]said as follows to Rama in the presence of Sita". (Here Sri is indicated as *purushakāra*). "The renowned [8]Lakshmana spoke thus to Sita and to Rama who had the great vow (of protecting His suppliants)". (Here Sri is indicated in the state of Her being the *upāya*) "This Sita[9] is capable of protecting this host of Rakshasis from (the anger of) Raghava." (Here and in the next passage, Sri is indicated as the *upāya*) "I will be [10]your protector" (Sita's words to the Rakshasis). "You will [11]enjoy yourself on the slopes of the hills with Sita and, whether you are asleep or awake, I will render service to you" (says Lakshmana): (Here is the prayer for the fruit, namely, *kainkarya*). "He is [12]seated on the serpent Ananta (Sesha), along with Her (Lakshmi)"; "When [12A]shall I become their eternal servant and thus find delight?" (This is also prayer for service). "Thy [13]spouse is Purushottama."

"When the Lord, [14]who is along with Sri, is pleased by the service rendered to Him by the eternal Suris who delight in that service."

"I worship [15]Vishnu with the inseparable Sri; He is the sea of purity and bliss"

"The [16]beloved of Sri, who is infinite and whose form is the unique abode of all auspicious qualities"

---

5. Ramayana: Yuddha kanda 114-15
6. Vishnu purana 1–18–17
7. Ramayana: Aranyakanda 15–6
8. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda 31–2
9. Ramayana: Sundarakanda 58–87
10. Ramayana: Sundarakanda 58–90
11. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda 31–27
12. Alavandar: Stotram
12A. Alavandar: Stotram 46
13. Alavandar: Chatussloki: 1
14. Alavandar Atmasiddhi
15. Ramanuja: Vedantasara
16. Ramanuja: Vedantadeepa

"In [17]Brahman, the abode of Sri (Srinivasa), may my mind be ever centred !"

"The Lord of [18]Sri, whose essential nature is opposed to all that is objectionable and faulty and who is possessed of auspicious qualities and is (at the same time) infinite *jnāna* and infinite bliss."

"Thou[19], the protector of the cowherds from the torrent of rain caused by Indra, and the Goddess Lakshmi."

"Thou art [20]ever with Lakshmi adorned with shining bracelets."

"Am I [21]still to remain in *samsāra* without enjoying you in the company of Lakshmi ?"

"Thy [22]grace and the grace of the lotus-born Goddess — with these I will sweep the floor of Thy temple."

"Thou [23]and thy lotus-born Spouse should be pleased to accept the service of the three worlds."

"I will [24]not be parted (from Thee) even for a moment", says Sri and abides on Thy chest."

"Thou [25]art all *jnāna* and bliss."

"Thou [26]art the light that never goes out and art beyond all limitations.

*BHAGAVAN POSSESSES ALL AUSPICIOUS QUALITIES :*

Bhagavan is to be thought of as being opposed to all that is faulty or objectionable ; for it has been said, "That [27]Supreme

17. Ramanuja : Sri Bhashyam
18. Ramanuja : Gita Bhashyam
19. Mudal Tiruvandadi. 86
20. Tiruvoymozhi : 4–9–10
21. Tiruvoymozhi : 6–9–3
22. Tiruvoymozhi : 9–2–1
23. Tiruvoymozhi : 9–2–3
24. Tiruvoymozhi : 6–10–10
25. Tiruvoymozhi : 1–1–2
26. Peria Tirumozhi : 3–8–1
27. Vishnupurana : 1–22–53

Goal, which is called Vishnu, is free from all imperfections." and "He is [28]greater than the great; in the Lord of the great and the low, there are no such things as pain." He is to be considered also as possessing all those qualities which are necessary for one who is the object of attainment and who is, likewise, the means of attainment. Many are the passages that speak of Bhagavan's qualities :—

"Hear [29]now of a man (Sri Rama) possessed of these qualities".

"Him who [30]is possessed of these qualities."

"Him who is [31]the eldest (son) and who is possessed of all noble qualities."

"Him who is [32]thus possessed of noble qualities"

"Rama [33]shone with (all these) qualities."

"Him who [34]was possessed of such qualities and of irresistible valour."

"There are [35]many noble qualities, O King, in your son."

"[36]Benevolence, compassion, learning, integrity of character control of the senses, control of the mind — these six qualities adorn Rama, the best of men."

"He is [37]known to be earnest in the matter of *dharma*; He is affectionate to those that seek His protection."

---

28. Vishnupurana: 6–5–85
29. Ramayana: Balakanda. 1–7
30. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda. 2–47
31. Ramayana: Balakanda 1–20
32. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 11–31
33. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 2–47
34. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 1–34
35. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 2–26
36. Ibid. 33–12
37. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 21–20

"Thou art [38]capable of affording protection and art also the refuge of all. This is declared by the divine sages."

"Thou art [39]the tree in which the good find their resting place; and Thou art the supreme refuge of all those who are in distress."

"He is [40]the store-house of such qualities as splendour strength, lordship, great wisdom, supreme valour and might."

"Is there any one that can comprehend the qualities of Vishnu, who is the inner self of all beings?" "My [42]boy, just as the gems in the ocean are countless, the qualities of the Lord armed with Chakra are innumerable;"

"His [43]qualities cannot be enumerated even in tens of thousands of years by even all the gods assembled together. If there be any man of pure mind anywhere, gifted with the period of life appointed for Brahma and if he be further endowed with a thousand mouths, he may be able, O best of gods, to enumerate one ten-thousandth fraction of Thy qualities or may not be able."

"Though Thy [44]qualities are infinite, yet six of them are foremost among them; even as the universe is borne within thy body, the other qualities too, are contained within them."

"It is [45]owing to the deficiency of arrows that the man who wishes to cover the sky desists and not owing to any deficiency in the space of the sky. (So also) we fall back from the praise of Govinda, owing to our deficiency of intelligence and not owing to any deficiency in His qualities."

38. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 121–18
39. Ramayana: Kishkindakanda 15–19
40. Vishnupurana: 6–5–85
41. Brahmapurana
42. Vamanapurana: 74–40
43. Mahabharata: Karna Parva: 83–15
44. ??
45. ??

"Thou hast [46]qualities which, being remembered, afflict me during Thy separation — me the great sinner."

"He has [47]noble qualities like bliss, which are limitless in extent"

*BHAGAVAN HAS A DIVINE AND AUSPICIOUS FORM :*

Bhagavan should be thought of, also, as having a transcendent, super-sensuous (*aprākrita*), divine and auspicious form, which is the resting place (*ās'raya*) of the universe, for there are many passages which refer to this form of His :—

"To Him [48]whose form ever remains the same — "

"He who [49]has faith in His form that is eternal and in His being the Supreme Deity — him Bhagavan approaches soon, O Poushkara."

"Hari has [50]another form entirely different from all forms seen in the universe, in which all these s'aktīs abide."

"He [51]assumes by His will a form that is immense and that is pleasing."

"The body [52]of the Supreme Being is not constituted of the (five) elements."

His form [53]is not constituted of *prakriti* or matter nor formed of flesh, lymph or bone."

"This form [54]has four arms, is supremely excellent, and is in Vaikunta."

46. Tiruvoymozhi: 8–1–8
47. Tiruvoymozhi: 1 - 1 - 1
48. Vishnupurana : 1 - 2 - 1
49. Poushakara Samhita
50. Vishnupurana: 6 - 7 - 70.
51. Vishnupurana: 6 - 5 - 84
52. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 206 - 60
53. Varahapurana: 31 - 40
54. Mahabharata: Mousalaparva: 5–34

"He has a [55]form resplendent like gold and capable of being seen by the mind as in a dream."

"In that [56]form, the whole universe occupies a small part."

"In Thy [57]form, O Lord, I see the gods."

"He has [58]a body on which rest weapons and ornaments."

"All this [59]universe is in His form as weapons and ornaments."

"The [60]Supreme Being armed with the conch, the *chakra* and the club is in the region beyond the universe of matter (*tamas*)"

From the Pancharatra Sastra (Bhagavat Sastra), it is learnt that this form of the Lord is of five kinds :— (1) The Supreme (*Para Vāsudeva*), (2) *Vyūha* (Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Aniruddha and Pradyumna), (3) *Vibhava* (*avatārs* like Rama and Krishna), (4) *Hārda* and (5) *archā* (images worshipped in temples).

Details concerning them may be learnt from the Pancharatra *s'astra* and from tradition. Bhagavan should also be considered as having endless glories or possessions (*Vibhūti*). For there are passages like the following which describe His *vibhūtis* :—

*THE VIBHŪTIS OF BHAGAVĀN : LĪLĀ AND BHOGA* :

"These [61]are the *vibhūtis* (glories) of Vishnu (i. e.) Brahma, Manu and others, time and all beings."

55. Manu: Smriti: 12–122
56 Bhagavad Gita: 11–13
57. Ibid: 11–15
58. Vishnupurana: 1–22–76
59. Ibid: 1–22–66
60. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda 114–25.
61. Vishnupurana: 1–22–32

NOTE :— *Harda* is an *aprakrita* form of the Lord present in the human heart, like the *archa* in temples.

"He has, for [62] His abode, the region of eternal glory called *Mahā vibhūti*.

"There is [63]no end, O mighty warrior, to my divine glories" (*vibhūtis*). These ideas are concisely expressed in the *sloka* :—

"The [64]*anda* of the Universe and whatever else is found within that *anda* are His *vibhūtis*."

These *vibhūtis* (possessions or glories) of God are of two kinds, sentient and non-sentient, and these again are of two kinds, some existing for His *Līlā* or sport and others for His enjoyment (*bhoga*). This division into things for play (*līlā*) and things for enjoyment (*bhoga*) is based on the difference in the *rasa* or delectation, though all of them have agreeableness (or *ānukūlyam*) in common. Bhagavan should be considered as being engaged in the work of the Universe merely for His play or sport (*līlā*), for it has been said as follows:

"From [65]whom is the origin *etc.* of this world"

"All [66]this is Hari's play (or sport)."

"Of [67]Him who plays like a child"

"[68]Playing like a boy with his toys"

"Thou [69]playest with Thy creatures, as if they were balls for sport."

"All [70]this is merely for play (on the part of Brahman) as in the world (kings play with balls).

62. Vishnupurana: 5-1-50
63. Bhagavad Gita: 10-40
64. Alavandar Stotram: 17
65. Brahma Sutras: 1-1-2.
66. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 206-58
67. Vishnupurana: 1-2-18
68. Mahabharata: Sabhaparva: 40-78
69. Vishnudharma
70. Brahma sutras: 2-1-33

### * *SUMMARY.*

Thus Brahman, the object of attainment, is ever with Lakshmi : He is infinite *jnāna* and infinite bliss, and is opposed to all that is imperfect and objectionable. He is possessed of countless auspicious qualities like wisdom and power. He has a celestial and transcendent form of auspicious nature. He has two *vibhūtis* ( *līlā* and *nitya* ) which are His body; He has, for His play or sport (*līlā* ), the work of creating the world, of maintaining and controlling it and the like.

### *THE NATURE OF THE INDIVIDUAL SELF:*

Now for the individual self (*Pratyak ātmā*) which is to attain *Brahman* :—

We should know that the individual self is in three categories : *Baddha* or those who are in the bondage of *samsāra*, *Mukta*, or those who have attained release from *samsāra* and *Nitya* or those who are eternally free from bondage. The seeker after salvation should also know the peculiar features which distinguish him as a seeker of the means of *mukti*, from other *baddhas*.

The *baddhas* (or the bound) are those caught up in the cycle of births and deaths owing to the stream of beginningless *karma*. They range from Brahma to the blade of grass and are called *kshetrajnāh*. ( Brahma, gods, men, beasts, trees, grass and so on ).

The *muktās* (or released souls) are those who, by adopting the means ( *upāya* ) prescribed in the *sāstrās*, have obtained the Lord's grace, permanently transcended the cycle of births and deaths, and have obtained unsurpassed bliss as a result of the unrestricted enjoyment of Bhagavan.

The *nityās* ( the eternally free ) are those whose knowledge has never undergone contraction and who are, in this respect, like

NOTE :—This summarises *Prapya* (i.e.) the object of attainment, *viz.* Brahman.

Iswara Himself. "They[71] are", it has been said, "of the same age as the Lord, eternal and free from all trace of imperfections," They have never been in *samsāra* and are engaged in eternal service to the Lord e g. Ananta (i.e.) Adisesha, Garuda and Vishvaksena.

The characteristic attributes common to all the three of them are being atomic (in size) (*anu*) and being of the nature of knowledge (*jnāna*), bliss (*ānanda*), purity (*amalatvam*) and the like. They are all *s'eshas* to Bhagavan and are entirely subject to His will. One should also understand what is distinctive and peculiar to one as a *mumukshu* or seeker after salvation. This has been (already) mentioned in the Introductory Chapter and will be described later on also.

The essential nature of the *jīva* who seeks attainment should be thought of, while considering the letter *m* in *om* and in *namas* or *namo* in *Tirumantra*, and in the part *nāra* of the word *Nārāyaṇa*, wherever it occurrs in the *Ashtākshara* and the *Dvayam*, in the first person singular form "*I* seek refuge" *prapadye* in *Dvayam*, in the second person singular of the word "thyself" in "surrender thyself" (*vraja*) and in the word *thee* (*tvā*) and in the sentence "despair not" in the *charamas'loka*.

*THE MEANS OF ATTAINMENT.*

We will describe at length the means of attainment (*upāya*) and its auxiliaries and also the nature of the fruit to be attained in their proper context later.

Among these two, the *upāya* or means of attainment is to be considered as indicated in *Tirumantra* in the word *namas* or *namo* and in the part *ayana* (resting place) in *Nārāyaṇāya*; n *Dvayam* in the first part and in the *Charama s'loka* in the first half.

---

71. Sri-gunaratna-kosa: 27

*THE GOAL OF ATTAINMENT.*

The nature of the fruit to be attained or enjoyed is mentioned in the dative or fourth case (i.e) in *Nārāyaṇāya* in the *Tirumantra*, in the word *namah* in the *Dvaya*, and in the *charama s'loka* in the words "I will free thee from all sins."

*THE HINDRANCE TO ATTAINMENT.*

The hindrances to the attainment are the multitude of obstacles that stand in the way of our attaining *moksha*, such as ignorance *(avidyā)*, *karma* and *vāsana* or impression left in the mind by *karma* in previous births.

The foremost of these hindrances is the punishment inflicted by Bhagavan for disobedience of His orders continually from time immemorial. This chastisement causes association with *prakriti* or matter with its three qualities *(satva, rajas* and *tamas)* and thereby contraction of knowledge. It brings about a connection between the soul on the one hand, and the body, the senses and the like which are specific modifications of matter (or *prakriti*) on the other. Further it makes the *jīva* subject to the sway of the body and the senses. To quote the words of the Alwar, "With the [72]strong ropes of my sins, Thou hast bound me tightly with the body, covered the sores within the body (like flesh, fat and blood) with the skin and let me walk away from Thee." "With [73]the body given by Thee at the time of creation, I have been wandering about to the satisfaction of the body." This chastisement often consists in placing the *jīva* in the body of animals which can have no knowledge of the *S'āstras* and cannot act in accordance with them. Even in births like those of men, it confounds the mind with the views of infidels and heretics and, even in the case of those who escape this, causes, through the concealing agency of the peacock feather of primal matter *(moola-prakriti)* and its modifications, the bodies and the senses, (1) ignorance

72. Tiruvoymozhi. 5-1-5. 73. Tiruvoymozhi. 3-2-1

of the truth and (2) erraneous knowledge and so also (3) subjection to sense-pleasures. As Sri Ramanuja says, "This [75](association with matter) causes obscuration of a knowledge of the essential nature of Bhagavan and also false knowledge. Besides it makes the *jīva* think that this association is delightful." As a consequence of this, it induces the *jīva* to disobey His orders and do forbidden things for the sake of petty pleasures. To quote again the words of the Alwar: "Is it [76]right on Thy part to confound my soul and excite my five senses by showing me, who am a sinner, all sorts of petty pleasures?" One act of disobedience leads to further acts of sin. Well has it been said, "Sin [77]committed again and again destroys wisdom and the man without wisdom begins further acts of a sinful nature." In consequence the Lord makes the *jīva* wander again and again through the cycle of life in the womb, birth, old age, death, and hell, as stated by Himself, "I throw [78]them always into asuric births" By means of the scriptures of those who are actuated by *rajas* and *tamas*, which show the way to secure petty pleasures, the *jīva* is made to fall at the feet of petty deities who are themselves souls (*kshetrajna*) fettered with similar chains. "Those who [79]are actuated by *rajas*" it has been declared, "worship *yakshas* and Rakshasas; and those who are actuated by *tamas* worship the spirits of the dead and elemental spirits (*Bhūtagaṇa*)". The *jīva* is deluded into considering himself as greatly benefited by the mean and gruesome enjoyments afforded by these deities in the same way as worms find a pleasure in dirt and filth.

Even those who practise *yoga* are made to practise it in connection with petty deities or in the meditations of such inanimate

---

75. Sri Ramanuja: Peria Gadyam.

76. Tiruvoymozhi. 6-9-9.

77. Mahabharata: Udyogaparva 35-73.

78. Bhagavad gita. 16-19.

79. Bhagavad Gita: 17—4.

things as *nāma being Brahman and are made to fall therefrom in the acquisition of minor results. Even those who are devoted to the soul or ātmā are made to meditate on their ātmā either in contact with matter or as separated from matter either as if it were Brahman or as the ātmā in its own essential nature. As the result of these four kinds of meditation, the jīva obtains petty enjoyments after which he falls back into samsāra. Even in the case of those who practise true meditation on Brahman, and who meditate primarily on *their own selves* as having Brahman for their inner self or who think primarily of Brahman who has for His body their own selves – even they may be detained by the state of kaivalya or the enjoyment of their own selves, by the attainment of the ‡‡ eight kinds of *siddhi*, by the attainment of the status of the *vasus*, or by the entrance into the body of Brahma and the like. Their (temporary) lapse from the highest aim or goal of life (namely, the enjoyment of the bliss of Brahman) is like that of a prince, whose coronation day has been already fixed, casting eyes on the servant maids who attended on him while in prison They are made to linger fondly over the body and the senses which are the result of past *karma* and those that are related to the body (like relatives) and the enjoyments connected with them. In this way they become subject to other pleasures than the final goal Thus there are many forms of hindrance in the way of the attainment of Bhagavan. When a well thirty-two steps wide has to be leaped over, it makes no difference whether the man falls at the very first step or at the thirty-second step. In the same way wherever or at whatever stage the hindrance occurs, the *jīva* has not transcended *samsāra*.

* NOTE :— In the Chandogya upanishad VII chapter, it is stated as follows :— "He who worships *nama* or *names* like rig veda, sama veda, Itihasa and purana as if they were Brahman will realise only very limited fruits such as can be reached with these names".

‡‡ NOTE :— The eight kinds of *siddhi* :— *Anima* (contraction of one's body to the size of an atom, *mahima* (assuming a huge form) *Laghima* (making one's body light) *Garima* (making the body heavy), *vasitvam* (mastery over self), *aisvaryam* (lordship) *prapti* the power of obtaining whatever one wants and *prakamyam* (perfect freedom of the will.)

It is true the *Gītā* says that for those who practise [80]*karma-yoga*, the effort will never perish or be in vain. What has been built up will, of course, remain built up, as it were, of stone. But we cannot say when the fruit will be attained, whether at the end of a *kalpa* or of a *manvantara* or of a *yuga*. Even sages like Vasishta, who ever acted in such a manner as to please God, had to wait long. Those who acted against the will of God like Vritra and Kshatrabandhu attained *moksha* without any such delay. So it is difficult to say which individuals have done meritorious deeds that would lead to *moksha* without delay. Similarly it is difficult to state who have done bad deeds leading to divine chastisement causing delay.

### *S'ARAṆĀGATI THE ONLY MEANS OF GETTING RID OF THESE HINDRANCES:*

How can this chief hindrance which is of the nature of divine punishment resulting from disobedience of the Lord's commands and which is the root cause of this chain of suffering-how can this be removed? The author of *Sri Bhāshya* (Sri Ramanuja) has declared that the only remedy for this hindrance is to obtain the favour of the Lord and that this can be done only by *S'araṇāgati* or self-surrender to the [81]Lord. This declaration is made by him, while commenting on the order in which the senses, the mind and the like have to be controlled as stated in *Kata upanīshad.*[82]

All these hindrances to *moksha* are to be understood in whatever is contrary to what is ordained in the three mysteries (*mantras*) (e. g. the feeling that the *jīva* is independent and acts for his own purposes which is opposed to the truths shown in the *Ashtākshara*), in the egoism, or sense of 'my' or 'mine' in the genitive *mama* in *namah* (*na* + *mama*) and also in the words' all thy sins' in the *charama s'loka*. These have to be thought of, so that one may feel the suffering which lies in walking on the hot

80. Bhagavad Gita: 2–40. 82. Katopanishad I. 3-10-11.
81. Sri Bhashya. 1–4–1.

sands of *samsāra* and desire to hasten towards the path leading to bliss.

*TAMIL VERSE :*

Those who know these five have declared them in order that I may not despair in mind and in order that the darkness of ignorance may not confound me - the five namely - the Lord of the lotus-born Lakshmi, who stands as the one thing to be attained, the *jīva* who loves the lord and craves for His grace by seeking His feet, the means (or *upāya*) to be adopted by the *jīva* for the attainment, and the fruit resulting therefrom, as also the strong fetters of sin due to delusion or ignorance (which are hindrances).

*SANSKRIT VERSE :*

That which is to be attained is the Supreme Brahman who is the *s'eshī* of all; I am also a fit person to attain Him; the attainment should come to me as inheritance due naturally to me as to the Suris; alas, by my egoism and the ignorance arising from it, I have lost it, but I have been taught that, by surrendering myself to the divine couple who are my *s'eshis*, I can now attain it.

## (5) THE CHAPTER ON THE THREE 'REALS' (OR TATVAS)

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

The delusion that the soul is nothing but the body and the senses (*prakriti*) disappears when one has a knowledge of the distinctive features of sentient beings and non-sentient things. So also the disputes on such questions as the unity of the *jīva* and God will no longer continue, when the characteristic features of each of them are marked out. Our *āchāryas*, whose wisdom never failed, teach us about the existence of three realities (*Tatvas*) classified in the *s'āstrās* as the experiencing subjects (*bhoktā*), the objects of experience and enjoyment (*bhogyam*) and He who rules over both of them (Iswara).

*CLASSIFICATION OF TATVAS OR REALS AND ITS USE:*

It may be asked why the *āchāryās* should state that the three *tatvās* or 'reals' should be specially prescribed for the study of those who seek *moksha*, when they form only a part of the six things that should be knowm, namely, the five truths *arthapanchaka* and the relationship of soul and body (which exists between God and the world). The answer is as follows:— It is necessary to root out the delusion that the body is the *ātmā* and that the *jīva* is independeant (of the Lord), as well as the view that there is no God, which is the cause of that delusion, for these are great obstacles to *moksha*.

The *s'āstrās*, therefore, divide Reality into three classes: the experiencing subject, the object of experience or enjoyment, and the Ruler who controls and directs them. Among them, non-sentient things which are the objects of experience are of three kinds (1) *Prakriti* or matter which has the three qualities of *satvam, rajas* and *tamas* (2) *Kāla* or time and (3) *S'uddha Satvam*, the substance of which the transcendental region beyond matter called Vaikunta is made. The nature of (1) *Prakriti*

has been thus described:— "It is [1]non-sentient (*achetana*). It exists (always) for others and it is eternal, but subject always to change or modification. It has three qualities *satvam*, *rajas* and *tamas* and is the field of action (*karma*) for the *jīva*". The nature of (2) *Kāla* or time is described thus:— "*Bhagavān* [2]*Kāla* (i.e.) Time, which is the body of Bhagavan, has no beginning nor end." "It takes [3]the forms of such divisions as *kalā* and *muhoortha* which are respectively $1\frac{3}{8}$ minutes and 1/30th part of a day (and is the cause of the modifications of matter). But it causes no change or modification in the transcendental world (*Aprākritaloka*) beyond matter". The nature of the transcendental world beyond matter is such that it is made of *s'uddha satvam*. The world [4]made of it is of the nature of *jnāna* and bliss. God controls time there; time is not the [5]cause of any change or modification in the world of *s'uddha-satvam* (as it is in the world of matter). Thus the nature of *Prakriti*, *Kāla* and *s'uddha satva* which belong to three classes of non-sentient things (*achetana*), has been described

*NOW FOR THE EXPERIENCING SUBJECT OR JĪVA:*

"The *jīvātmā* is [6]neither a god nor a man"; "He is [7]neither a god nor a man". (*That is:* These distinctions are based only on the respective bodies, whereas the soul within has no such distinctions.) The *jīva* is of three kinds:— *Baddha* or the soul in bondage is called in the *Gītā* "*Kshara*" (because he is in contact with matter which is subject to change) All beings[8] (from Brahma to the blade of grass) are '*Ksharas*' or *Baddhas*. The *mukta* or the soul which has obtained release from contact with matter is no longer subject to change and is called *akshara* or *Kootastha* (because it is immutable). The third class

1. Parama Samhita: 2
2. Vishnu Purana: 1-2-26.
3. Vishnu purana: 4-1-84.
4. Pancharatra,
5. Mahabharara: Santi parva 196-9.
6. Vishnu purana: 2-13-98.
7. ? ? ?
8. Bhagavad Gita 15—16.

of *jīvas* are the *Sūrıs*[9] who are described as seeing eternally the transcendental world beyond matter. The third class of 'Real' is Iswara who has been thus described — He is all,[10] He knows all; He sees all; He possesses all strength, all knowledge, all power, all wealth: He is without fatigue, without lassitude, without fear, without anger, without desire and other such (blemishes). Thus has the nature of Iswara been taught.

Thus the three realities consist of the Ruler and the Ruled (the latter including *prakriti* and the sentient beings) and our *Āchāryas* (Sri Yamunacharya and Sri Ramanujacharya) have stated this concisely in the words "(*Īs'wara*)[11] on whom depend the essential nature (*svarūpa*), the continuance (*sthıtı*) and the actively (*pravrittı*) of the three kinds of sentient beings and of non-sentient things with all their differences". The three kinds of sentient beings are those that are in bondage (*baddha*), those that have obtained release (*mukta*) and those that are eternally free (*nitya*). The three kinds of non-sentient things are *Prakriti* with its three qualities (*satvam*, *rajas* and *tamas*). Time, and *S'uddhasatvam*. The essential nature (*svarūpa*) means the substance or thing which is defined by attributes peculiar and unique to it. Continuance (*sthıti*) means continuance of the thing or object in time. This is eternal for eternal things. In the case of non-eternal things, this continuance is subject to expansion and contraction in accordance with the will of Iswara. Activity or *pravritti* includes action and abstention from action. All these three: the essential nature (*svarūpa*), the continuance in time (*sthithı*) and the activity (*pravritti*) are seen (by perception and other *pramāṇas*) to be different in the case of each thing or object.

9. Vishnu Purana 1—6—39.

10. Vishnu Purana 5—1—47.

11. Alavandar: *Atmasiddhi* and Ramanuja's *Vaikunta-Gadyam*.

When the *pramānas* or sources of knowledge (like perception and inference) reveal an object or thing, they disclose the *essential* nature or *svarūpa* of the object, the attributes that define it, the (other) qualities of the object so defined and also its activities. The essential nature is always revealed as endowed with the attributes that define it. It is not possible to speak of the essential nature of a thing (*svarūpa*) except in terms of the respective attributes. To speak of an object *minus* its attributes would be as meaningless as to speak of a hare's horns.

### *THE NATURE OF THE JĪVA.*

Therefore the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the *jīva* may be described as *jnāna* (knowledge), bliss (*ānanda*), (*amala*) being pure, and being atomic (*anu*) in terms of its defining attributes (*i. e.*) being of the nature of knowledge, being of the nature of bliss, being pure and being atomic. This reality, *viz.* the *jīva* is always *s'esha* to Iswara (i e) it exists only for Iswara and it is unconditional *s'esha* only to *Him.* Thus its existing (always) for the Lord is affirmed (*ayogavyavaccheda*) and also its existing for no other than the Lord (*anyayogavyavaccheda*). This quality of being *s'esha* to the Lord, which is disclosed in the first word of *Tirumantra*, namely *om* (*aum*), is of the nature of a relationship (*sambandha*) and requires, therefore, a thing having that relationship and cannot be understood without it. So this *s'eshatva* may be called an additional quality of a thing, namely, the *jīva*, which has already been defined by its defining attributes. Here the definition of the *jīva* is that it is a thing which is sentient while being also atomic. Similarly the *jīva* may also be defined as a thing which is sentient while being also by its nature, *s'esha.* So this quality of being *s'esha* may also be called an attribute which defines the thing, *viz.* the *jīva.* Similarly Iswara may be defined as having sentience along with omnipresence (*vibhu*). He may also be defined as one that is absolutely independent of everything else, while being the unconditional *s'eshin* (i e.) one for whom all other things exist (unconditionally). The class of *ātmās* which includes

*jīvas* and Iswara may be defined as those that are sentient and *pratyak* (i.e.) which are subjective and have inwardness. To be sentient is to be the possessor of knowledge. To be subjective or inward (or *pratyak*) is to possess luminosity to oneself. The *ātmā* or soul is self-luminous and shines as 'I' without the help of the attributive knowledge *(*dharmabhūta jnāna*). Since sentience and inwardness (*pratyaktva*) are common to both *jīvas* and Iswara, the *jīva* has to be defined as having, in addition, dependance by its very nature (on Iswara). In the *Ashtākshara*, in the dative of the first syllable (*āya*) *a* in *aum* (*om*), the *jīva*'s existence for the fulfilment of Iswara's purposes is stated without any condition; therefore the *jīva* is unconditionally and absolutely dependent upon the Lord of Sri (Lakshmi), who is the universal Saviour. This statement of the absolute relationship between the *jīva* and *Iswara* throughout the existence (of the former) is called *ayogavyavaccheda* or denial of the non-existence of the relationship. The second syllable *u* in *aum* (*om*) in *Ashtākshara* means 'only' and brings out the idea that the *jīva* exists for the purposes of *only* Iswara and denies his dependence or existence for the sake of any others. This denial is called *anya-yogavyavaccheda* or denial of (the *jiva's*) relationship with others. We will show later that this *s'eshatva* extends from the Lord to His devotees as well. The activity of sentient beings consists in their being the doers and the enjoyers subject to Iswara's will and purpose. Since this activity and this capacity for enjoyment are given to them by Him, they are for His purposes and not their own.

*BADDHAS :*

The difference between sentient beings that are in bondage and others consists in the former having *avidyā* (*ignorance*), *karma*, the impressions left by past *karma* (*vāsanā*) the inclinations due to them (*ruchi* or taste for worldly enjoyment) and

*NOTE :— The soul *is* of the nature of *jnana* or knowledge (i.e.) its *svarupa* is knowledge. At the same time the soul *has* knowledge as an attribute and this *jnana* or knowledge is called *Dharmabhuta jnana* or attributive knowledge.

association with *prakriti* or matter. The differences existing mutually among *jīvas* in respect of knowledge, pleasures and the like may be seen in the groups of *jīvas* ranging from *Brahmā* to a blade of grass.

These bound souls support bodies given to them by Iswara in accordance with their respective *karma*, both by their essential nature (*svarūpa*) as *jnāna* and by their attributive knowledge (*dharma bhūta jnāna*). The support given to the body by the essential nature (*svarūpa*) serves to make it exist. The support given to it by the attributive knowledge or *dharmabhūtājnāna,* while in such states as waking, serves to enable the body to be useful for securing the ends or goal of life and for adopting the means to secure these ends. In the case of the supreme devotee who has already adopted the means of attaining *mukti*, the support given by attributive knowledge makes the body useful for the enjoyment of Bhagavan and for rendering service to Him. In the case of sinners, this support given to the body is productive of adverse experiences. When the *jīva* leaves the body, the latter undergoes disintegration. The constituent substances of the body into which it disintegrates (such as the five elements) remain the body of Iswara. As regards continuance in time *(sthiti)*, the specific character of souls in bondage, as distinguished from others, is continuous association with the body until *mukti*. As regards activities, these *jīvas* in bondage have three kinds: *puṇya*, *pāpa* and that which is neither of these two.

*MUKTAS :*

The difference between released souls and others is that the former have attained their essential nature in a manifest condition by the removal of obstacles. As regards their continuance in time *(sthiti)*, their distinctive feature consists in this :— their essential nature (*svarūpa*), which has become manifest, will continue to be so without any end. Among souls that have attained *mukti* or release, the mutual difference is their having attained the manifestation of their essential nature earlier or later The difference in

their activities consists in specific kinds of service to the Lord chosen by each and prompted by love, which has resulted from the perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan gained after the loss of it from time immemorial.

### *NITYAS :*

The specific and distinctive feature of the *nityas* (the eternally free) is that the manifestation of their essential nature (*svarūpa*) is without any beginning and also their absolute dependence (on the Lord) : The specific feature of their continued existence in time is that their enjoyment of the **S'eshī* is beginningless. Since this is common to all *nityas*, there is no mutual difference between their respective states of continuous existence in time. The difference in their activities consists in the continuous performance of specific kinds of service to the Lord from beginningless time which, though different, yet form a continuous stream of service. It has been said that such *nityas* as Ananta (*S'esha*) and Garuda hold certain specific offices and perform specific kinds of service in due relation to them. If so, it may be asked, how it would be possible to reconcile this with the statement (made by Sri Ramanuja in the *gadya*) that *nityas* (the eternally free) and *muktas* (who have attained *moksha*) have all access to all kinds of service. The answer is that they are not barred from any form of service which is pleasing to them and is in accordance with the will of the Lord and that no one of them ever desires to render the forms of service which have been specially marked off for others. Besides the service rendered by any one of them is as pleasing to the Lord as that done by others ; therefore the service rendered by any one of them gives the same pleasure of service to all of them. There is no difference in the delight which results from the service as its fruit. Hence there is nothing unreasonable in stating that all of them have access to every form of service.

*NOTE :— ' Instead of *Seshi* the author's use of the word *seshitatva* is to include *Sri* or Lakshmi also as *Seshi*". Chetlur commentary.

### *DHARMABHŪTAJNĀNA* *
(Attributive knowledge).

To all these *ātmās* or souls, in the same way as their essential nature (*svarūpa*) is that of a substance, their attributive knowledge (*dharmabhūtājnāna*) is also a substance. Its essential nature has not been separately referred to in the *passage* because of its having been included as an attribute to the soul.

(Note: *Passage* · the passage which refers to the three kinds of *achetana* in quotation 11 on p. 50).

This attributive knowledge is luminous by itself to the soul which possesses it, while revealing objects. (That is, when the attributive knowledge reveals, for example, a pot to the soul which possesses that attributive knowledge, it reveals its own existence as well). To Iswara and the *nityas* (the eternally free), this attributive knowledge is eternally all-pervasive. For others in the state of *samsāra* or bondage, it is subject to varying degrees of contraction and expansion owing to *karma*. In the state of *mukti*, it is all-pervasive for all released souls, owing to perfect expansion and remains so throughout. The functions (*pravritti*) of attributive knowledge are as follows:— It discloses objects (external or internal); while willing or making an effort, it directs the body (and the senses *etc.*); in the state of bondage, it undergoes contraction and expansion, it undergoes experiences *(bhoga)* which reveal objects as agreeable or disagreeable Experience or *Bhoga* is the process of feeling a thing as agreeable or disagreeable. All objects, which are among the glories of Iswara, are, by their very nature, agreeable and are enjoyed as being agreeable by Iswara, the *nityas* and the souls that have attained *moksha*. To those in *samsāra*, however, these objects appear at different times, and in

* According to *Visistadvaitinms,* the self or *atma* is, in its essential nature or *svarupa*, knowledge. It also possesses *jnana* or knowledge as its *dharma* or attribute. This knowledge is called *dharmabhutajnana* or attributive knowledge.

(See p. 52 foot-note)

different places and in relation to different *jīvas* as slightly agreeable, or disagreeable, or indifferent, but these variations do not belong to them by nature. Their slight agreeableness, disagreeableness, or being neither of the two is the fruit of the past actions of the *jīvas* awarded to them by Iswara, whose will is irresistible. The *jīvas* that are in bondage are subject to the experience of the fruits of their *karma*, both by nature and by auxiliary causes. By nature they are subject to it, because they are sentient beings entirely under the control of another (Iswara). The auxiliary causes are their having committed offences against the Lord. In the case of *muktas* and *nityas*, although, by their nature as being subject to the control of Iswara, the experience of the fruit of action might be possible, yet since they never perform any action displeasing to Him, there are no auxiliary causes for such experiences. Iswara, by His essential nature, is not subject to such experience or enjoyment of the fruits of action, since He stands as the Ruler over all and with no one else to command Him. Nor are there any auxiliary causes in His case, as there is no one whose commands He may be said to have disobeyed.

The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of all *ātmās*, *jīvās* as well as Iswara, is being self-luminous to oneself. This luminosity of the self to itself suffers, even in the case of those in bondage, no contraction or expansion at any time. The attributive knowledge (*dharmabhūtajnāna*) of all *ātmās* is luminious to its supporting self, while disclosing objects (like pots). A common characteristic of *svarūpa jnāna* or the self and attributive knowledge or *dharmabhūtajnāna* is their both being of the nature of knowledge and being self-luminous (i.e.) being luminous without requiring anything else to light them up. Attributive knowledge has the additional characteristic of revealing or disclosing objects (*vishayitva*). The additional characteristic possessed by *svarūpajnāna* (or the self) is subjectiveness or inwardness (*pratyaktva*). *Jnāna* or knowledge, (which is the character of both of them), may be defined as that which makes a thing luminous; that is, it makes either itself or something else fit for being spoken

about and acted upon (*vyavahāra*). Self-luminosity is the capability of being luminous without the need of any other knowledge to illumine it. Attributive knowledge has *vishayitva*, because it discloses objects other than itself (like pots, cloths *etc.*) The subjectiveness or inwardness of souls or *ātmās* (*pratyaktva*) consists in their being luminous to themselves; that is, the benefit of their luminosity is enjoyed by themselves The *ātmā* or self is the recipient of the benefit of every object being disclosed or revealed. *Pratyaktva* is only a special instance of this general statement, for in it, the self receives the benefit of its own disclosure or revelation. A thing which does not possess this *pratyaktva* or subjectiveness does not also possess the common benefit of objects being disclosed. It cannot, therefore, be called sentient Though subjective knowledge or the 'I' and attributive knowledge, which is its attribute, are both luminous by themselves, yet they are also capable of being apprehended by other forms of knowledge (like that from *śāstras*), as being endowed with attributes like being eternal. When one's attributive knowledge happens to be known or apprehended by one with the help of another piece of knowledge, the latter is called another piece of knowledge, merely because of the direction to which the attributive knowledge is turned. When we perceive an object, say a pot, *dharmabhūtajnāna* contacts the object and reveals it to the soul or self; but when the *dharmabhūtajnāna* itself becomes the object of knowledge, it is revealed to the self by a part of it.

*THE THREE KINDS OF NON-SENTIENT BEINGS:*

The three classes of non-sentient things are capable of being apprehended only by others, (and not by themselves). Non-sentience means being without the possession of knowledge. To be capable of being apprehended only by others means that their apprehension is not to themselves or for their own benefit. These two (*viz.* being without the possession of knowledge and the apprehension not being for their own benefit) are true also of attributive knowledge (*dharmabhūtajnāna*), which is thus a non-sentient thing.

Of the three classes of non-sentient things, matter (*Prakriti*) and time (*Kāla*) are *jada* (i.e.) not luminous by themselves. There are some who hold that *s'uddha-satvam* is also *jada* To be *jada* is to be without self-luminosity. Those who have studied such treatises as *Pāncharātra* or the Lord's *S'āstra* would say that *s'uddhasatvam* is luminous by itself, as it is declared to be so in that *s'āstra*. It may be asked why, if it is luminous by itself, it is not directly perceived by beings in the state of *samsāra*, without having to be known through *s'āstra* only. The answer is as follows :— The soul whose essential nature (*svarūpa*) is knowledge and its attributive knowledge are both luminous by themselves and yet the former is luminous to itself and not to other souls, who have to know it with the help of their own attributive knowledge. Attributive knowledge, though luminous to its substrate, namely the soul, is not luminous to others. In the same way, the *s'uddha-satvam* may be luminous by itself only to Iswara, the *muktas* and the *nityas* and not to others. There is nothing unreasonable in this view.

It has been said in the following *s'loka* :—

" We [12]bow to Hari and proceed to expound the *s'astra* called *Nyāya-Tatva* :— to Hari who sees, directly by perception and of His own accord, all things simultaneously." It may be asked how, to Iswara who sees all things with His attributive knowledge, *s'uddha-satvam* could be * luminous by itself, when it is illuminated by the attributive knowledge of Iswara. The answer is as follows :— Iswara's attributive knowledge apprehends all things including His own divine *svarūpa* and yet do we not hold that His divine form is luminous by itself? So also it is possible that *s'uddhasatvam* is self-luminous, though it is apprehended also by the attributive knowledge of Iswara. This is true also of *nityas*. When lighting up an object (like a pot), attributive knowledge, it

* NOTE: — A pot is not luminous, because it becomes visible or is seen only when lighted up by the flame of a lamp. The flame of a lamp is luminous, because it does not require anything else to become visible.

12. Nyaya-tatvam: Mangala sloka.

has already been said, is luminous by itself only to its sub-strate, namely, the self or soul. In the same way *s'uddhā-satvam* may be luminous by itself to those that have attained release in their new state. There is nothing inconceivable in this The luminosity of attributive knowledge is obstructed at the time when it is not lighting up external objects (like pots), by past *karma* of certain kinds. So also the luminosity of *s'uddhasatvam* may meet with obstruction in the state of bondage and may not, therefore, be apprehended by those in *samsāra*.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA.*

The luminosity of (attributive) knowledge is natural to it *(svābhavika)*, after release from *samsāra*, but is obstructed sometimes during bondage. So also in this case, ( there may be obstruction during *samsāra* and luminousness after release )".

Substances which are subject to modification (*vikārī*) are sometimes agreeable and sometimes disagreeable to the same individual and to different individuals. ( Similarly *s'uddha-satvam* may be luminous to God, the eternally free souls and those souls that have attained release from bondage, while being non-luminous to those in bondage.) There is no contradiction in this. In matters ascertained by the authority of the Scriptures, it is no use pointing out inconsistency based on analogy. If, without accepting this principle, we were to say that *s'uddha satvam* is said to be luminous not in reality, but by courtesy, as it were, or figuratively (*upachāra*), it might become possible to argue that knowledge, bliss *etc.* are also true of the self or soul only figuratively and not in truth. It may be asked :—" How could there be, in a luminous object (*viz. s'uddhasatvam*), qualities like form and taste and classifications like earth and water and also modific tions. Self-luminous things like the soul and attributive knowledge do not, in general, have shape, t iste, smell and the like )"? The answer is as follows :— ( All self-luminous objects are not alike but have differences peculiar to each ) ; for example, knowledge or self which is

the substrate (*i e.* the soul) and attributive knowledge, though both are luminous, are different from each other in other respects. Knowledge, which is the substrate, has subjectivity, while attributive knowledge is objective, and apprehends objects. So this objection can be given a counter-check (*pratibandhi*) and cannot hold good in a matter where the authority of the *S'āstra* must be accepted. *S'uddhasatvam*, which is luminous, is included among the three classes of non-sentient things, because it has not the quality of sentience or being the knower The activities (*pravritti*) of these three kinds of non-sentient things are of the nature of varied modifications (*pariṇāma*) in accordance with the will of Iswara.

## *PRAKRITI.*

Among these, *prakriti* or matter is, in its essential nature, possessed of three qualities or attributes. *Prakriti* or matter is constantly subject to modification When its three qualities *satvam*, *rajas* and *tamas* are evenly balanced, there is dissolution or termination of the world (*mahāpralayam*) and when these qualities are uneven in propoitions, *prakriti* undergoes modifications into *mahat* and the like. The region of matter which is not modified and the region which has become modified have been classified by the *S'āstras* into twenty-four *tatvās* or reals – *prakriti*, *mahat*, *ahankāra*, *tanmātras* (five), the elements (*bhūtas*) (five) and the senses (eleven) – the senses of knowledge (five), the senses of action (five) and the mind (*manas*).

Sometimes they are spoken of as more than twenty-four or less than twenty-four in accordance with the terms or basis of classification. The subdivisions of each of these classes of *tatvas* or reals, and the deities (*abhimāni devatās*) presiding over or representing each of them should be understood by those who are qualified for their respective meditation. What we are primarily concerned with here is their being different from the *ātmā* or self. These may all be understood as weapons and ornaments of the Supreme Being, in the following way :—

*TAMIL VERSE:*

The self or soul is the invaluable gem, (*koustubha*); *prakriti* or matter is the mole on the Lord's body (*Srivatsa*); the *tatva* or real called *mahat* is His club; knowledge and ignorance (*jnāna* and *ajnāna*) are His sword and its sheath, the *ahankāras* are His bow and conch (*tāmasa ahankāra* is the bow (*sārnga*) and *sātvika ahankāra* the conch); the mind is His discus (*chakra*); the ten senses are arrows; the *tanmātras* and the *bhūtas* (the *elements*) form His *vanamālā* (*vaijayantī*) or garland of wild flowers; *Garuda* is the *Veda* and Sri Krishna (Kannan) the object of description in the *Veda*, is endowed with these and protects all from the top of Hastigiri".

The distinctive features of each of these twenty-four 'reals' may be seen in their respective definitions. Of these the twenty-three reals which are effects and modifications of prakriti and also their effects and modifications differ from one another in their nature and these differences may be understood from a study of the *purānas*.

*ESSENTIAL NATURE, ACTIVITY ETC. OF PRAKRITI:*

*Suddhasatvam*[13]

"*Satvam*[13] or *Suddhasatvam* illumines its own existence; it is different from the quality called *sātvam*" 'The creator[14] is beyond *tamas*;' "It is different from[15] *prakriti* and is revered by the gods". These and other passages declare the existence of a region (of *suddha satvam*) beyond *tamas*. Therefore the passages which say "It (*Prakriti*) is eternal and has no limits and is beyond all measure. It is endless and incapable of being measured" should be understood as stating that *moola prakriti* or

13. Pancharatram
14. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 114–15.
15. Jitanta Stotram: 2–21.
16. Vishnu purana: 2–7–25, 26.

matter is endless or infinite except for the region covered by the *nitya vibhūti* (the region of eternal glory).

The activity or *pravritti* of matter (or *prakriti*) is to become modified with its three qualities duly balanced (during *pralaya*), and with them as uneven after creation (*srishti*), for the sake of the experience of souls bound in *samsarā*, and for their release from bondage and so also for the delectation or *līlā* of Iswara It also acts in various ways, having assumed the forms of the body and the senses. Owing to the qualities of *rajas* and *tamas* in it, it conceals the truths concerning the 'reals' (*tatvas*) and gives rise to false or erroneous knowledge While existing for the experiences of the *baddha* during *samsāra*, it may also reveal the *tatvas* or 'reals' just as they are, when the quality of *satvam* in it is developed and may help in the striving for *moksha* All these contribute to the delectation or *līlā* of Iswara.

*S'uddhasatvam* is, in its essential nature (*svarūpa*), the seat or abode of that *satvam* which is unmixed with *rajas* and *tamas*. Its specific state in time or *sthiti* is eternal in the (permanent) halls and towers (of Vaikunta) and in the specific and permanent forms of Iswara and the eternally free. It is not eternal but temporary in such things as the forms that come into existence out of a temporary desire of Iswara, of the *nityas* and of the *muktas*. Its specific activity is to undergo modifications to suit their desires so as to serve as accessories for the enjoyment (*bhoga*) of Iswara, the *s'eshī*, and as instruments for the service to be rendered by the *s'eshas*.

*TIME: Kāla.*

Time or *Kāla* is, in its essential nature, non-sentient or non-luminous and all-pervasive (*vibhu*). It is eternal because its continued existence (*sthiti*) is not limited by time. Its activity consists in its being accessory to creation and the like by such divisions as *kalā* (1/30 of *muhūrtha*), *kāshta* (1/30 of *kalā*) and the like.

All these substances (*dravya*) are, in their essential nature (*svarūpa*), eternal. Some of them are said to be temporary or transient, owing to their assuming a new state or condition (*avasthā*), which justifies their being called by a new name. As new states similar to those which have perished follow each other in continuous succession, they are said to be eternal in the sense of a stream or current of water (retaining the same form, though the water at any time may be different).

The essential nature (*svarūpa*), the existence in time (*sthiti*), and the activity (*pravritti*) of all these substances are dependent upon Iswara, because they have no existence *etc.* apart from His existence and without His will or desire. Therefore it is due to Iswara's will that all substances are, by their very nature, agreeable. From this it follows that to Iswara, to the eternally free and to the released souls, they are all agreeable. To those bound in *samsāra*, however, they appear as disagreeable or as only slightly agreeable at different times and to different persons in accordance with the *karma* of those persons. Even to bound souls, the essential nature of their own self or soul is always to be agreeable, as such is the will of Iswara. It is indeed, because of this false identification with the self which is agreeable and also *karma*, that the body which is disagreeable appears agreeable to those who are ignorant. Since *prakriti* and its modifications are harmful owing to *karma*, the man who desires release from bondage should abandon the attachment to them. To those that have attained *moksha*, however, these very things are agreeable and not to be rejected. All those things that are taken for one's own with the notion of 'I' and 'Mine' are harmful. They become agreeable, when a man has come to understand his real nature and to realise that these things exist for the purposes of the Lord. We will explain this matter at length when we come to speak of the perfect and complete enjoyment of (the bliss of) Brahman.

*ISWARA:*

The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Iswara on whom depends the existence of all things is truth (*satyam*), knowledge (*jnāna*),

infiniteness (*ananta*), bliss (*ānanda*) and purity (*amalatvam*) because of attributes like being truth, being knowledge, being infinite, being blissful and being pure. These attributes define His *svarūpa* or essential nature. This truth is brought out by the Alwars in the following passages; — "Thou [17]art light that never becomes extinct and is not capable of being measured" (where His essential nature as Truth and Knowledge is revealed as also His infiniteness) "Thou that [18]art perfect knowledge and bliss" and "Thou [19]that envelopest all and art a Light greater than all other lights, being both knowledge and bliss" "He is [20]the Pure". In these and other ways the Alwars meditated on Him. His other qualities, along with His divine and auspicious form and such other things, are attributes of His essential nature (*svarūpa*) already defined by those attributes. Among these qualities knowledge, strength, lordship, valour, energy, splendour—these six are associated with His nature as the Supreme Being. Goodness, spontaneous love, and the like are qualities that make him easily accessible to all. These qualities are, at all times, connected with His essential nature (*svarūpa*). The statement that some of these qualities are associated with the Supreme Person (*Para*), some with *vyūha* and so forth is only to show what qualities the Lord of all reveals to those who are devoted to any of these manifestations of His. (It does not mean that the other qualities are absent in any of these forms). Just as in the respective *vidyās* of the Upanishads, we are to meditate on certain specified attributes of Brahman, so also certain specified attributes are to be meditated upon in connection with particular forms of the Lord as revealed in *Pāñcharātra* or the Scripture of the Lord. In the *Para* or *Supreme* Vasudeva, all the six *qualities

17. Peria Tirumozhi: 3-8-1.
18. Tiruvoymozhi 1-1-2,
19. Tiruvoymozhi 10-10-10;
20. Amalan Adi Piran (Tiruppanalwar) 1.

**Six Qualities or Gunas*: 1. *Jnana* (Knowledge) 2. *Aiswarya* Lordship; unimpeded activity; activity based on independence 3. *Sakti* (ability) potency to become the material cause of the world; also the power of bringing about what appears impossible of being brought about; 4. *bala* strength, absence of fatigue; sustaining power; 5. *virya* virility; changelessness in spite of being the material cause of the world; 6. *tejas* splendour, might, the power to overcome others.

beginning with knowledge are to be thought of. The *s'āstras* sometimes say that the *vyūhas* (or *emanations*) are four and in some places that they are three. Where it is said that there are four *vyūhas* and that *Vāsudeva* is one of them, since there is no difference in the qualities to be meditated on between the Supreme Vasudeva and the *Vyūha* Vasudeva, it is tantamount to saying that there are three *vyūhas* Those who hold that the *vyūhas* are three state their view briefly in the following *s'loka* :— "O Lord, [21]Thy original form shone with these six attributes; then came three forms of Thine which had, each of them, a couple of these attributes." Their respective qualities and activities are epitomised in the following *s'loka* :— "O, Sovereign of [22]Sriranga! As the Supreme Vasudeva (*Para*) endowed with all the six qualities, you are the object of blissful enjoyment for those that have attained *moksha*; as Sankarshana being endowed with strength and knowledge, you destroy the Universe and also promulgate the *s'āstras*; as Pradyumna being endowed with lordship and virility, you create the Universe and make *Dharma* prevail; as Aniruddha being endowed with splendour and the power to overcome others, you protect the world and teach the Truth. In this way you divide yourself."

The differences arising from planes like the waking state have been thus summarised :— "O Lord, *of [23]those that meditate on Thee, some are like those in the waking state, some like those that dream in sleep, others like those that sleep without dreams, and others still are like those that have fallen into a swoon. (In the first group, the senses function, in the second the senses do not function, only the mind is active; in the third group even the mind does not function; they only breathe; in the fourth group even the breath is suspended) In the same way, O Lord, Thou art in four forms and dividest Thyself into four forms and art meditated upon with attributes and weapons suited to each."

21. Varadarajasthavam 23. Rangarajastavam: Uttarasatakam 39.
22. Rangarajastavam: Uttarasatakam 40.

* This *sloka* cannot be easily understood without the account given in the Appendix.

The twelve forms that begin with Kesava are other forms derived from the *vyūhas.* (Bhagavan also manifests Himself as *vibhavas.)* These *vibhavas* are thirty odd forms like Padmanabha. Among them Avatars like Matsya and Kurma are specified in relation to some specific purpose. In these *vibhavas* or *avatārs,* Iswara conceals those attributes of His which He wants to conceal and reveals those attributes which He wants to reveal to suit the special mission which He has undertaken in them. Among them, there are varied manifestations which are countless. So has it been said, "The [24]forms of Krishna are innumerable". Other forms similarly derived from the *vibhavas* can also be seen in the *s'āstras.* Sometimes the Lord enters into some *jīvas* with His own specific form and into others with His energy (*s'akti*) and accomplishes wonderful things. These belong to another class of *vibhavas.* The forms of the Supreme Vasudeva (*Para*), the *Vyūhas* and the *Vibhavas* assume the [25]forms of the images and enter into the shapes of images (installed in temples), for the sake of devotees as desired by them. This is *archāvatāra*: The Lord is (also) present in a subtle form in the hearts of all *jīvas.* This form is called *Antaryāmi Avatāra,* as meditation on this form has been prescribed as the means which enables those who wish to enter into the meditation of the *Antaryāmin* or the divine all-pervading *svarūpa* of the Lord. It has been said of this meditation:— "Those [26]who have attained success in *Ashtānga yoga* and who are desirous of worshipping the One who dwells in the heart are fit to mediate on the one (i. e.) the form in which He dwells in the hearts of all." Therefore this One (*Hārda*) is spoken as *Antaryāmī.*

All these forms of incarnation are constituted of the substance called *s'uddhasatvam* and have no connection with *karma* or its fruits. They are therefore called *pure* creation (*s'uddha srishti*).

24. Pancharatra 25. Satvata samhita 6–22

This is stated in the following passage: "He assumes a form similar to that of the image, enters into it, and remains there".

26. Satvata samhita: 2–7–8

These *avatārs* (*vibhava*, *archā* and *Hārda*) are all real; in them there is no contraction or abridgement of *jnāna* and the other attributes of Iswara; the bodies of these *avatārs* are made of *s'uddha-satvam*; the reason for these *avatārs* is only the Lord's will; their time of manifestation is the time when *dharma* has to be safe-guarded; their purpose is the protection of the good and the like; those who meditate on these *avatārs* with clear knowedge may attain *moksha* at the end of this very life without any future birth, by their successful adoption of the right means suited to their competency and capacity. All these truths have been explained by the *Gītāchārya* in five *s'lokas* beginning with:—

"*Bahūni me* [26A]*vyatītāni etc.*" Many are the births that I have gone through, just like you.

This meditation on the *vibhavas* (or *avatārs*) creates supreme faith or confidence (*mahāvis'vāsa*) in the mind of the seeker after salvation who seeks *prapatti* as an independent means or *upāya*, by affording him a knowledge of the great qualities of the Lord who is sought as the refuge and this at the moment when he adopts *prapatti* as the means. So also the worship of *Archāvatāra* (the image) will lead easily to *moksha* Bhagavan Sounaka has said :— [27]" Having shaped a beautiful image of Vishnu with a lovely face and lovely eyes, out of gold, silver and the like in a manner that would be pleasing, one should adore it, bow to it, sacrifice to it and meditate on it. By doing so, one would enter into that form which is none other than Brahman and will have all one's sins dispelled." The Alwars, too, very largely dwelt on this secret doctrine about the Lord's *avatārs* and the distinctive excellence of the *avatārs* in the form of *archā* or consecrated images and considered the Supreme Self (in *Vaikuṇṭa*) as their original cause.

Iswara, who is in these varied forms, creates, maintains and destroys all, is also the giver of *moksha* and has such other acti-

---

26. Satvata Samhita 2-7-8 27. Vishnudharma: 103-16

26A. Bhagavad Gita IV5.

vities. These activities of His are due to the over-flow of His bliss or *ānanda*.

### *LAKSHMĪ*

Iswara is with His consort in all situations as stated in passages like: " Lakshmi, the [28] mother of the world, is eternal and inseparable from Vishnu." This may also be clearly understood from the writings of Parasara and Parankusa (Nammalwar), who, for the help which they have rendered, have been spoken of by Alavandar with great regard in these terms: " I bow to the generous sage, Parasara, who composed that gem of a *purāṇa* ( *Vishnupurāṇa*), wherein he discloses, as they are in reality, the truths concerning *cit*, *acit* and Iswara, their distinctive nature, *swarga*, *moksha* and the means of attaining them " and " I bow my head at the two feet of Nammalwar fragrant with *vakula* flowers, for they are, to all those who are connected with me, mother, father, wives, sons and all forms of wealth and lordship."

In this context, we have to understand a difference in their activities or division of labour, as it were; for the Lord is concerned with the punishment (of the evildoer) and Lakshmi with pleading to Him for mercy on behalf of the sinner; the *Mīmāmsakas* have declared that the object which is stated by analogy to have attributes similar to those of another object actually described must be different by that very circumstance* from that other object. So in this case, as it has been stated by analogy or *atides'a* " Just [28A] as Vishnu is everywhere, so also in Lakshmi, O best of Brahmins", there should be a difference between Bhagavan and Lakshmi. This difference should be understood as referring (here) only to the difference in their functions or activities. This is the conclusion arrived at in the following *s'loka* in *S'rīgunaratna-*

---

28. Vishnupurana 1–22–53 28A. Vishnupurana 1-8-17

*NOTE:— By that very circumstance:— Without requiring any other authority to prove it. The different activities shared by Lakshmi and Her Lord are determined by their own will and not by difference in the nature of the two.

*kos'a* ; " Youth and other attributes are common to both of you; however the Lord has manly qualities, like independence, conquest of foes, firmness and the like; you have such feminine qualities as existing solely for the husband, compassion and forgiveness. Thus you two have taken diverse qualities." " It is impossible to understand the real nature of God ", says *Nammālvar* in (1-3-6) So in a matter like this, vain assertion or insistence is not proper.

As has been said:— "Some make [29] weak cases appear strong." Although it is possible to prove whatever we please with the help of our proficiency in logical disputation, we submit to the authority of the *s'āstras*. Therefore we should understand clearly the truth concerning the Real or *Tatva* that rules and the reals or *tatvas* that are ruled, only in accordance with the *pramāṇas*. We need not try to know all things but should try to know what is exceedingly useful. In matters which are only of limited use, we need not be so curious to obtain knowledge. The pilot tries to know just as much about the (vast) ocean as would enable him to steer the ship along the right path. Similarly we have to understand necessarily as much as has been said here. In order to obtain unshakable conviction (about these truths), more elaborate treatises may be studied.

### *OTHER CLASSIFICATIONS OF THE TATVAS OR 'REALS'*:

Here we have classified the *Tatvas* into three. So also some consider Iswara as the only real or *Tatva*, because all other reals are His attributes. Some have classified the *tatvas* into two as follows:— The ruler and the ruled; the self and the non-self; the means and the end (*upāya and upeya*). Some classify what should be known into four: the Saviour and that which is to be saved; that which should be rejected and that which should be accepted. Others classify what should be known under five heads as pointed out before and others into six. In the *Rahasyas'āstras*,

29. Mahabharata: Sabhaparva: 39–5.

what should be known is stated to be seven. To all those who think in those varied ways, there are respective advantages accruing to the strengthening of their knowledge and their daily observances.

What is said in the following *s'loka*, is of course true :— " A knowledge [30] of the *s'āstras* can be obtained only with the greatest difficulty. Further it may unsettle the mind. Therefore having obtained a knowledge of Hari from the teaching of the *guru*, a man should cease from all such activities." This does not mean that one should make no attempt to learn the *s'āstras*. It only means that one should learn what is most important as quickly as possible and proceed at once to adopt the means learnt therefrom for attaining *moksha*, without spending too much time over elaborate treatises, which might cause delay in the adoption of the means. The man who has enough to eat without tilling the soil would never think of tilling it. So also without wasting time over what is unimportant, we should, as soon as possible, adopt the means prescribed for *moksha*.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

A clear knowledge of what is useful, indifference to the three ends (*dharma*, *artha*, and *kāma*) and being one in thought, word and deed - these constitute the elixir of happiness.

*TAMIL VERSE :*

Our ancient *āchāryas* who gave us the essence of the *Veda* have, out of compassion (for us), taught us clearly all about the three wonderful and varied *tatvas*, *cit*, *acit* and Iswara in order to remove, from our minds, the cruel delusion in regard to the body arising from *karma* and the notion that we are independent (of the Lord).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

By the addition of a point here and the omission of a point there, there are countless systems of thought, each appearing beautiful with fallacious arguments owing to the endless differences due to 'is' and 'is not'. These are indeed as numerous as the poems composed by the imagination of poets (some omitting an incident and others inventing an incident and so forth). Notwithstanding this, the unparralleled vision of the truth (about the *tatvas*) will make them all vanish at once into thin air. When the man is seen in reality, the delusion that he is an animal or a log of wood, *sthāṇu* vanishes at once. So also when, with the help of the *pramāṇas*, Purushottama is ascertained as the Supreme Deity, the delusion that Rudra (Sthanu) or any other is the Supreme Deity is at once dispelled.

## 6. THE CHAPTER ON THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE SUPREME DEITY.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :

Those who are not proficient in the *S'āstras* say that there is only a single self, that all deities (like Indra, Agni and so on) are only one, that the three deities (Brahma, Vishnu and Siva), when properly understood, are alike and of equal rank, that these three deities are only one deity (in three forms) and that the Supreme Deity is other than these three and hold other such (erroneous) views, but those who have discrimination entertain no regard for these (divergent views). The Upanishads, with one voice, and so also Manu, Vyasa and others, following the Upanishads, proclaim that Sriman Narayana is our Lord who has all (things and beings) for His body, that He (alone) can give *mukti* and that He is the object of blissful enjoyment for those who have attained *moksha*.

### *WHY SHOULD WE DETERMINE WHO THE SUPREME DEITY IS :*

All 'reals' have been classified into matter (*Prakriti*), the individual self and the Supreme Self or Iswara on the basis of the differences among them pointed out before. (From a knowledge of this classification alone), it is not possible to attain supreme devotion to a single deity to the exclusion of all others, unless the truth as to who is the Supreme Deity has been ascertained as in the words of the Alwar : " She will not worship any god other than Bhagavan nor dream of any such god ". Further, to no one but the exclusive devotee of the Supreme Deity, is *moksha* possible of attainment without delay. So it is necessary to decide who is the Supreme Deity.

### *CRITICISM OF ERRONEOUS VIEWS :*

In this context, the view that all (things and beings) are the substance of Brahman cannot be accepted, since sentient and non-

sentient things are known by the *pramāṇas* to be entirely different from one another. In the same way, the essential differences between the *jīva* and Iswara cannot be ignored (and they disprove the view that they are one) Similarly the mutual differences among the gods are based on the *pramāṇas*, because of their association with varied pleasures and pains. Therefore, though the indwelling Supreme Self, *Antaryāmin* is one, the view that Brahma, Rudra, and the other gods are not different from Iswara and from one another cannot be justified.

## *BRAHMĀ, RUDRA AND OTHERS ARE CREATED BEINGS:*

Those who are considered as the chief among these gods, namely, Brahma, Rudra, Indra and others are created beings subject to the law of *karma*, as can be proved by *pramāṇas*. It has been said, "When [1]all individual beings and even the aggregate *jīva* (*Samashti*) have gone into dissolution and when *mahat* has become merged into *prakriti* (from which it evolved), there is one remaining as the soul of the universe and He is the Lord Narayana." Again it is said, "The [2]god Narayana is at the beginning; from Him arises Brahma", "[3]Narayana is the Supreme Deity; From Him was born Brahma, the four-faced, and from Brahma arose Rudra, O goddess", and further, it is stated, "Then you, [4]the irresistible, assumed the form of Vishnu from that eternal existence (*viz.* Narayana) for the protection of all beings." From this it is clear that, by his own will, He incarnated as the middle one (i.e. Vishnu) of the Trinity. He who is expressed by the names, Vishnu and Narayana, is stated to have been the ultimate cause of the world in His previous and original state. It is

1. Mahabharata: Santi parva 210–24.
2. Varaha Puranam: 25–6.
3. Varaha Puranam: 90–3.
4. Ramayana: Uttara Kanda (Brahma's words) 101–26.

also said elsewhere, "There is no [5]being in the world that is eternal, either among those that move or among those that do not move, except that one Primaeval Purusha called Vasudeva." This declares that He alone is eternal. Therefore, other views such as the following:— "The gods of the trinity (Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva) are of equal greatness"; "The three gods of the Trinity are only one", "Iswara is above and beyond the Trinity" "Either Brahma or Rudra among the Trinity is the Supreme Lord"—these views stating equality, identity, the existence of an entity superior to all the three of the Trinity and the supremacy of a different member of the Trinity, are against the *pramāṇas*. That Brahma, Rudra, and the like are created beings subject to *karma* may be seen in the following passages:— "The[6] *purusha* or person created by Him (Narayana) is called Brahma in the world". "Having [7]caused the dissolution of the worlds before, you lay on the waters of the great ocean and created me at first by your *Māyā* (will)", "Brahma's name [8]is *Ka* and I, *Īs'a* rule over all embodied beings. We two were born from your limbs. Therefore you are called *Kes'ava* (*Ka* and *Īs'a*)" Further Brahma says, "I was [9]born from His graciousness for some reason and you, from His wrath, for some other reason, in one of the earlier creations." The very words of these rival gods, which are, so to say, a deed of release written with their own hands, declare this truth. That Brahma and Rudra are subject to *karma* and attained their high status, because of having worshipped the Lord of all with special rites, may be seen from the following passages:— "All the [10]gods sacrifice to Vasudeva and all the gods bow to Vasudeva." "Brahma, [11]Rudra and Indra, together with all other gods and the great *rishis* worship the divine Narayana or Hari, the greatest of Gods", "Meditating [12]constantly on the

5. Mahabharata: Santiparva 347–32
6. Manusmriti 1–11
7. Ramayana: Uttarakanda 104–4
8. Harivamsa (Siva's words) 131–48
9. Mahabharata Santiparva 352–62
10. ?
11. Mahabharata Santiparva 350–30
12. Mahabharata Santiparva 210–33

Lord, Brahma, Isana (Rudra) and others have not yet attained to a realisation of His nature. It is He whose protection I seek." And Brahma says:— "Having [13]created me in the divine lotus in your navel shining like the sun, you have assigned to me all the duties of creation (of Prajapati) and with this burden imposed on me, I worship you, the Lord of the Universe." And in another place, we find the following:— "Brahma, [14]born of the lotus, having worshipped Vishnu for thousands of crores of *yugas*, obtained again the position of the creator of the three worlds. This is what we have heard." So also it is said:— "[15] Mahadeva (Rudra), who is called Viswarupa, sacrificed all things in a great *yajna* called *Sarvamedha* and then sacrificed himself also mentally". "Mahadeva sacrificed himself in the *Sarvamedha* and became the god of gods. The [16]resplendent Rudra, clad in the skin of the elephant, reaches all the worlds with his knowledge and shines with his fame". "Since in this [17]great sacrifice, he gave me my share of the offering, he has been authorised by me, in the Vedas and the Sutras, as fit to receive his share of the offerings." These gods, Brahma, Rudra and others are dependent upon the *Māyā* of Bhagavan ((i e.) *Prakriti*) and are subject to the influence of the *gunas* (*satvam, rajas* and *tamas*). Their knowledge is also subject to contraction and expansion. All this may be understood from the incidents of the loss of the Vedas and others and also from the following *sloka*:— 'All the [17A]gods beginning with Brahma, all men, and all animals are enveloped by the dense darkness of delusion arising from the whirlwind of Vishnu's *Māyā* (*Prakriti*)." "The wise say that [18]these (positions) are the rewards of those who follow the good path of *Satva*, *namely*, Brahma and the other creators, and the deities presiding over *dharma*, *mahat* and *avyaktam*"

13. Ramayana: Uttarakanda 104–7–8
14. Mahabharata: Kundadharopakhyana
15. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 8–37
16. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 20–12
17. Mahabharatha: Santiparva: 349–61
17A. Vishnupurana: 5–30-17
18. Manu Smriti: 12–50

## *THE OTHER GODS ARE THE SERVANTS OF BHAGAVĀN.*

That these (*Brahma* and *Rudra*) render service to the Lord, who is their inner self, with the help of the knowledge given to them by Him may be seen from the following *s'loka* :— "These two [19], who are the greatest among the gods, are considered to have been born (respectively) out of His (Bhagavan's) graciousness and wrath; and they perform the duties of creation and destruction in accordance with the lines laid down by Him." They are not pure and are not objects for spiritual meditation (*s'ubhās'raya*), for it has been said : "Bhagavan [20]Hiranyagarbha (Brahma), Vasava (Indra) and Prajapati ......... all these gods and others are impure, their births being due to past *karma*" and again, "From Brahma[21] to the blade of grass, all beings that have their existence in the world have had their births as the result of *karma* and are subject to the cycle of births and deaths (*samsāra*)" and further, "The [22]man who has no attachment (to the things of this world) should know that every being including Brahma is impure as being tainted by the ripening of *karma* — to Him, Vasudeva alone is the Supreme Goal or refuge." These statements have been made by Parasara, Sounaka, Suka and others. Brahma, Rudra and others have to seek Bhagavan's protection and Bhagavan has to seek no body else's protection. This is clear from His own words :— "The gods[23] are under the protection of Rudra, O King, and Rudra is under the protection of Brahma. Brahma is under my protection and I do not seek the protection of any one. There is no one that I need for my protection, for I am the refuge of all." These gods are among the great possessions (*vibhūti*) of Bhagavan, who is the Lord of both *līlāvibhūti* and *nitya-vibhūti*,) — for it is said, "Brahma[24] Daksha and others, Kala,

19. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 350-19
20. Vishnupurana: 6-7-56, 77.
21. Vishnudharmam: 104-23
22. Bhagavatam: 11-19-18.
23. Mahabharata: Aswamedhikaparva 118-37, 38
24. Vishnupurana: 1-22-33

Rudra and the destroyer of Kala — all these are among the *vibhūtis* of Bhagavan," where Brahma and Rudra are spoken of as being on the same footing as Daksha and others.

### *THE OTHER GODS ARE THE PRAKĀRAS OR MODES OF BHAGAVĀN.*

These gods (Brahma, Rudra etc.) are others like the modes or *prakāras* of the Lord of all who has all things as His body. This is clear from the grammatical apposition or co-ordination *(sāmānādhikaraṇya)* in which they are used, just like other substances, in connection with such words as Narayana. (For example it is said that Rudra is Narayana, Brahma is Narayana, the earth is Narayana and so on.)

That these are His bodies and that He is their inner self or soul is evident from these words of Brahma to Rudra :— "He is[25] the inner self of you, of me and of all those who are called embodied beings. He sees all but cannot be apprehended by any one, anywhere." These are *s'eshas* who exist solely for the fulfilment of His purposes and He is their *s'eshī*. This truth was expressed by the all-knowing Rudra himself in *Mantrarājapadastotra*, where he says, "All beings are, by their nature, the servants of the Supreme Self. Therefore I am also Thy servant and, with this knowledge, I bow to Thee."

### *BHAGAVĀN HAS NEITHER EQUALS NOR SUPERIORS :*

Thus Narayana is destitute, in every way, of equals and superiors. This may be seen from the following *s'lokas* :- "O best[26] of men, there is no one superior to (Narayana) the god of the lotus-like eyes;" "There was[27] no one superior to Him in the past nor will there be any one superior to Him in the future". "There is no[28] god superior to Vishnu, O best of kings;" "There is

25. Mahabharata: Santiparva : 361–4.
26. Mahabharata : Bhishma parva 67–2.
27. Mahabharata : Bhishma parva 67–17.
28. ?

nothing[29] more auspicious than Vasudeva, there is nothing more purifying than Vasudeva. There is no greater divinity than Vasudeva. No one who adores Vasudeva ever perishes." "In all [30]the three worlds, there was no one like Him ever born and there will be no one like Him born in the future." "There[31] is no divinity higher than Kesava." "He is the [32]King of all kings, Vishnu, the great Brahman. We know Him to be Iswara. He is the Father, the Creator." Those who are lucky, even while in their mother's womb and have received, while in the state of being born, the glance of Madhusudana will become desirous of *moksha*; for His glance dispels *rajas* and *tamas*. Those who are looked at by Brahma and Rudra just before birth will become subject to the influence of *rajas* and *tamas*. This difference is brought out in the following passages:— "He who[33] is looked at by Madhusudana just as he is being born should be considered as a pure soul (*sātvika*) and he will ever think of the goal of *moksha*. If, on the other hand, a person is looked at immediately at birth by Brahma or Rudra, his mind will be overcome by *rajas* and *tamas*."

### *THE ASPIRANT FOR MUKTI SHOULD WORSHIP ONLY BHAGAVĀN.*

That these gods are not to be worshipped by those who desire *moksha* (and that Narayana, the Lord of all, who is the cause of these gods, is alone the deity to be worshipped by all those who desire *moksha*, including these gods) may be seen from the following *s'lokas*:— "To those [34]who are sunk in the sea of *samsāra* and whose minds are overpowered by the objects of sense pleasures, there is no other refuge than the ship of Vishnu." "Those who [35]have a discriminating intelligence never worship Brahma, or Rudra or any of the other gods, for the fruit of their worship

29. ?
30. ?
31. Naradiya Purana 18-33
32. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva 43-13
33. Mahabharata: Santiparva 358-73-77
34. Vishnudharmam: 1-59
35. Mahabharata: Santiparva 350-36

is very limited." "Hari alone[36] is fit to be meditated upon, O Brahmins, by you who are noted for your *satvam*. He is always to be adored and I am the means for enabling you to remember Hari." If, in some places, these gods are spoken of as assisting in the attainment of *moksha*, it should be understood to mean that they, like Acharyas, assist by imparting knowledge and in such other ways. This is also the purport of the following passage; "The man[37] who is a devotee of the god of the sun *(Sūrya)* will, after seven more births, become a devotee of Rudra by the Sun's grace. He who is a devotee of Sankara will, after seven more births, become a devotee of Vishnu by the grace of Sankara." And again :— "He who is a devotee of Vasudeva will, after those seven births, become one with Vasudeva by His grace." In this context it has to be stated that devotion to Surya and others leads gradually to devotion to Bhagavan, only in the case of those who are not subject to mental delusions about the Supreme Self and the Self's that are below it — such delusions as holding that they are all one or that the lower self is the Supreme Self or that all these divinities are of equal power, and provided they are not filled with the hatred natural to the *āsuric* or demoniac nature. This is evident from the *s'loka* : "Those who[38] hold Purushottama as being similar to the other deities are to be considered heretics unfit for any kind of *karma* or rite." People who have such delusions in their knowledge (and worship) will meet with defeat due to the punishment inflicted by Bhagavan, although they have devotion to other deities. From the following *s'loka :* "O mighty Rudra,[39] get *S'āstras* of deluding import composed and by prompting men to slight effort, show the fruit of these actions as soon as possible"—from this *s'loka*, we may infer that, if there is success in achieving tangible fruits by following these false *s'āstras*, it is only for making men fall into delusion and thence into hell.

If Bhagavan, whose will is irresistible, decides that some one deserves His punishment, then that person will find no other god

36. Harivamsa· 132–8. 14
37. ?
38. ?
39. Varaha Purana: 70–36.

capable of protecting him. It is said in the *Rāmāyaṇa* "If a man has [40]deserved death at the hands of Rama, neither the four-faced Brahma, who was born of no mortal, nor the three-eyed Rudra who destroyed Tripura, nor the great Indra, who is the leader of the gods, will be able to shield him in battle." If, on the other hand, a man seeks refuge under Bhagavan, even if all the gods and intimate friends of His, like Sugriva, the great king, propose to injure him, Iswara will protect him by over-coming wicked men like Ravana who should be overcome, and helping, by persuasion, such good people as the leaders of the monkeys who had spoken against Vibhishana, as they deserve that course. For has he not said :— " To him who[41] has sought my protection even once and begged of me saying, "I am thine" — to him I afford protection from all beings. This is my vow" and is He not one who ever keeps his word and sees that His vows do not fail ?

### *THE BOONS GRANTED BY OTHER DEITIES ARE DEPENDENT ON THE GRACE OF BHAGAVĀN.*

If men seek the favour of other gods, they will soon obtain minor rewards which are like poison mixed with honey, for it is said, " Those [42]who desire the fruits of *karma* or rites perform sacrifices to the gods and obtain the rewards of their actions in the world of men very soon." And again .— " From them[43] they obtain the objects of their desire as ordained by myself ". The Lord said to the gods :— " This Brahma[45] is your father and mother and grandfather and will, under instructions from me, grant boons to all beings, and Rudra, his younger brother, who had his origin in my forehead, will, under instructions from Brahma, grant boons to all beings "

As stated in these passages, these are dependent upon Bhagavan. It is said :— " The[46] rewards (obtained from these deities) are of

40. Sundarakanda 51-45
41. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18-33
42 Bhagavad Gita: 4-12
43. Bhagavad Gita: 7-22
45. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 349-76-77
46. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 350-36

a very limited nature;" "In *kalpas*[47] or ages when *satva* is predominant, Hari's glory becomes great and, only in them, those who have successfully practised *yoga* in accordance with the *s'āstras* will attain the supreme goal." Therefore, from these other deities, *moksha* cannot be attained even after a length of time. From the Lord of all, on the other hand, a man obtains unsurpassed wealth and the like, even as [48]Brahma attained his high position after worshipping Vishnu for crores of thousands of *yugas*; and afterwards, like the man who bathes in the Ganga for physical refreshment and thereby obtains purification also from all his sins, he gets incidentally freedom from sins; his *rajas* and *tamas* decline and his *satvam* becomes dominant and, in course of time, he will attain *moksha* like Janaka, Ambarisha, Kekaya and others. But there is delay in such cases as may be seen in the following passages:— "At the [48A]end of many virtuous lives, the man attains spiritual wisdom and seeks my protection" and again, "Those [49]who have attained success in crores of births will at length become well established here." "Those who[50] have, in many thousands of lives, become purified of their sins by penance, meditation and *yoga* *(samādhi)* will acquire devotion to Krishna." When the desire for *moksha* has become ardent and when the man practises an *upāya* which is within his power, there will be no delay in the attainment of *moksha*, for He has declared: "To those who have fixed their minds on me — to them I become the redeemer and save them quickly out of the sea of *samsāra*". To him who adopts *prapatti* as the independent means, there is neither delay nor absence of delay, except in accordance with his own desire. These distinctions will be accepted by all who have regard for the *pramāṇas* and they have their effect by the will of Iswara which cannot be questioned, for has it not been said, "The [52]lordship of Iswara is absolutely independent and brooks no questioning?" To

47 Matsya Purana: 290–16
48. Mahabharata: Kundadhara Upakhyanam
48A Bhagavad Gita: 7-19
49. Poushkara Samhita
50. Pancharatram
51. Bhagavad Gita: 12–7
52. Vaikuntasthavam: 55

those who do not clearly understand these principles in this way, the worship of other deities is prescribed in such passages as the following: "They may [53]be worshipped by men other than those who have discriminating intelligence."

Those who worship these other deities without knowing that they are the bodies of Bhagavan are like a follower of Charvaka (a materialist who believes that there is nothing other than the body called the soul) who anoints the body of the king, his master, without knowing that his master has a soul. It is true that the soul of the king is pleased with the service done to his body. In the same way, as a matter of fact, the devotion to these other deities is really the worship of Bhagavan, as they are only His bodies. Notwithstanding this, the fruit of this devotion to the lower deities would be only partial and incomplete. (We may remember in this connection the *s'loka* in the *Gītā*) which says:— "Those [54]who sacrifice with faith and earnestness to other deities — they, too, sacrifice only to me, but not in the manner and according to the rules prescribed for it." Since the rite is performed in an irregular manner without the observance of all the rules, the fruit will be partial and incomplete. If, on the other hand, a man, knowing that these other gods are only the bodies of Bhagavan, offers worship to them owing to a special desire for obtaining quickly the smaller goods of life, the fruit will be fully and completely realised in perfect measure.

The *Gītā* thus speaks of those who approach Bhagavan for minor fruits:—"The man[55] who has lost his wealth but seeks to recover it, the man who wants to enjoy his own soul, and the man who wants to acquire prosperity" All these will have their reward in even greater measure." Of those who adore Bhagavan without any such desire for minor fruits and only for the sake of *moksha*, it is said, "Hari[56], who confers *moksha*, gives to His worshippers who meditate on Him, health of body, wealth, and enjoyments, in

53. ?
54. Bhagavad Gita: 9-23
55. Bhagavad Gita: 7-16
56. Vishnudharmam: 74-43

addition to what they desire *viz., moksha* ". These are, so to say, adventitious or incidental rewards (*ānushangika*) not sought by them. Sri Kulasekhara Perumal, to whom such adventitious prosperity was vouchsafed, says in this connection:—" The [56A]man who desires only Thee and does not seek great prosperity — prosperity comes and seeks him." Isandan also has stated this in his *stotra* thus :— " Those enjoyments which were formerly desired but could not be obtained come to us, of their own accord, without any effort or exertion on our part, like rivers flowing into the ocean, (although we do not desire them now)." (It may be asked why all those who desire only *moksha* are not blessed with the good things of this life). (The answer is) :— This is due to the special form of meditation or *vidyā* practised by the devotee and the special desires of his earlier life. (Some *vidyās* secure worldly prosperity in addition to *moksha* after death, while others secure only *moksha*.)

The Alwars, too, have spoken of these differences between the Lord of all on one side and Brahma, Rudra and the other gods on the other side, in passages such as the following :— " The gods[57] are only the food eaten by Bhagavan and vomited afterwards, (eaten during *pralaya* and vomited after creation); are there any (gods) who are not of the nature of this vomit ? " " Narayana [58]created the god with four faces, and the god with four faces created Sankara." " O Thou[59] that art the original bulb of the lotus of the navel, from which arose Brahma, Siva, Indra and the others who worship you with reverence." " Arjuna [60]saw on Siva's head, the flowers of the garland that he had placed at the feet of the holy Bhagavan which had measured the whole world, and understood clearly that Sri Krishna was the Supreme Deity wearing a garland of green tulasi " " Indra[61] who rules over the gods, Brahma the god with four faces, and the great Siva with his matted locks of hair — (all these) meditate with earnestness and

56A. Perumal Tirumozhi: 5-9
57. Peria Tirumozhi: 11-6-2
58. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi: 1
59. Tiruvoymozhi: 10-10-3
60. Tiruvoymozhi: 2-8-6
61. Tiruvoymozhi: 3-6-4

sincerity on His lotus-like feet and go about praising Him." "He alone[62] is the Lord of Siva who is spoken of in high terms, of Brahma and of all others." "O Lord[63] whose glory cannot be adequately understood even by him who rides on the unique bull and by Brahma," And again, "Neither the god who has the bull for his banner, *viz.* Siva nor Brahma, nor Indra nor any other knows the remedy for the disease called " birth " (i.e.) *samsāra*."

This truth about Bhagavan being the Supreme Deity should be considered as present in the first letter *a* of *aum* in *Tirumantra* and in the word *Nārāyaṇa* therein and in the word *Nārāyana* occurring in *Dvayam* along with its attribute *S'rīmān* (along with Sri or Lakshmi) and likewise in the words 'me' and 'I' occurring in the *Charama S'loka*.

For men other than those who have this conviction about the Supreme Deity, it is not possible to be in the state of having Bhagavan alone exclusively as their protector, a state such as is described in the following and other words of the Alwars :— "There is [65]no refuge other than Krishna". " Whether you [66]weed out my suffering or whether you do not weed it out, I have no other means of getting it removed." "I [67]know of no other staff of support for my soul". (We may see also) the ten stanzas beginning with: "If you do [68]not withhold the suffering due to my *karma*", The Alwar* who learnt all spiritual truths directly from the Lord of all discerned the truth about the Supreme Deity in *Tirumantra*, gave up all devotion to other deities and became well established in exclusive devotion to Bhagavan, which extends to His devotees and also in rendering exclusive service to the Lord and His devotees. He gives expression to this in the following verse:— "I cannot[69] live in agreement with those who

62. Tiruvoymozhi: 4–10–4
63. Perialwar Tirumozhi: 4–10–4
64. Perialwar Tirumozhi: 5–3–6
65. Tiruvoymozhi: 2–2–1
66. Tiruvoymozhi: 5–8–8
67. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–10–3
68. Perumal Tirumozhi: 5–1
* Tirumangai Alwar
69. Peria Tirumozhi: 8–10–3

hold that there is any other deity (than the Lord); I have also obtained the privilege of rendering service to Thy devotees." In the verse beginning with "The earth, water, fire, air, ether—having created these," the Alwar places (before himself) the three gods concerned in this controversy and, after a consideration of *pramāṇas*, ignores two of them and decides on the remaining deity who is Supreme Light[70] "as His god having a complexion resembling that of a cloud." Perialwar also declares in the following verse that the deity who is of this form and complexion is the Supreme Reality (*Tatva*) described in all the Vedas: "If [71]you [71]meditate on the god who is of the colour of the ocean by uttering the origin of all Veda, namely, the syllable *aum* with three *mātras* (*metrical* units) etc. etc."

Having in mind the passage in *Taittirīya* which describes the Supreme Deity as being the Lord of Lakshmi, the Alwar understands that this description excludes other gods and exclaims:— "I have[72] seen Lakshmi and the form of the Lord shining like gold on which she rests." Beginning with this verse he concludes with the statement that "for wise men it is only Bhagavan who ever acts in conjunction with Lakshmi that is both refuge and goal." This he declares in the following verse:— "Our refuge [73]is the goddess residing in the beautiful lotus covered with honey, who has long eyes and shines with a splendour which throws into the shade the lightning seated in the black cloud and who fascinates (with her beauty) the God armed with the discus and wearing the garland of tulasi on his broad chest." The conclusion has been arrived at that this couple (Bhagavan and Sri) are our goal of attainment and our refuge.

This truth regarding the Supreme Deity was taught at great length by the great sage, Parasara, to his worthy disciple who was fit to receive the great spiritual secrets, in the following *s'loka* :—

70. Tirunedunthandagam: 2
71. Perialwar Tirumozhi: 4-5-4
72. Third Tiruvandadi: 1
73. Third Tiruvandadi: 100

"In all [74]beings, gods, men and animals, all that is masculine is Bhagavan, Hari, and all that is feminine is Lakshmi, O Maitreya, and there is no one other than they." This sage, Parasara, obtained the knowledge concerning the Supreme Deity by the grace of Pulastya and Vasishta who gave him this boon :— "You will[75] understand the truth about the Supreme Deity." "What was[76] said to you by Pulastya will certainly become true." Our great *Āchārya*, Sri Yamunamuni, also speaks of Parasara with the greatest regard in 'I bow[77] to Parasara, the best of sages." And Nammalwar, who received the gift of knowledge free from all delusion and *bhakti* from Bhagavan and who occupies the highest place in the line of those who have performed *prapatti*, has stated the same truth (*namely*, that Lakshmi should also be considered along with Bhagavan as our refuge and our goal) :— "You have[78] enabled me to have a vision of Thyself and Thy consort (Lakshmi) with the shining bracelets, standing together."

We have already stated all that should be said in this connection in our commentary on *The Four Slokas* (of Yamunacharya) with a refutation of the views of opponents and refer the reader to the same.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Our *Āchāryas* have proclaimed, in no uncertain terms, that our eternal Lord with His Consort seated on the lotus is the Supreme Deity, so that disputants, proud of their knowledge of reasoning and argumentation, may not, each according to his own will, declare that the ultimate cause is this or that (Brahma, Rudra or Indra) thus causing dread to the Vedas* and trepidation to all devotees.

74. Vishnu Purana: 1-8-35
75. Vishnupurana: 1-1-26
76. Ibid: 1-1-28
77. Alavandar Stotram: 4
78. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-9-10

* NOTE:— The Veda is afraid of the man who has only a little knowledge of it. (*Bibheti alpa sruteh vedah*)

*SANSKRIT VERSE:*

In this world which is enveloped in *avidyā* or *karma*, there may be found, here and there, a single individual who has closely studied Vedanta and who can realise that Narayana with His consort Sri is the only refuge, when rulers sitting on victorious thrones as sovereigns of countries, of the whole world, and of Brahmanda itself perish utterly along with the story of their lives.

## (7) THE CHAPTER ON THE ASPIRATION FOR *MUKTI*.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

Who, indeed, is there that will bear the bondage of *samsāra* — who that has understood the revolutions of time, the nature of matter (*prakriti*) and its evolutes or modifications which cause contraction of knowledge, the evils attendant on the enjoyment of the pleasures of this world and of *svarga*, the experience of sufferings resulting from sin which resemble a pit of fire, the true relationship that exists necessarily between himself and the Supreme Being, the region of divine bliss and also the nature of the body which is like a prison-house?

Thus, from the *S'āstras* which treat of the soul, a man should understand the principles and truths explained so far. He should know clearly that the soul or self is self-luminous or luminous by itself, is a knower, doer and enjoyer having a body and that the soul is atomic, eternal, without parts or limbs, incapable of being cut, burnt, injured, dried up or otherwise affected and that its essential nature is such as not to admit of increase or diminution and that, in all these respects, it is different from the body, the senses and the like which are attributes of the self. With the conviction that the soul or self is capable of passing on into another world and taking up another body, the man learns, in a general way, that it is possible for him to have higher aims or goals than those found in this world. He is full of dread at the thought of falling into hell and the like or experiencing the sufferings of another life and abstains from those actions which are the causes thereof. He is also convinced that he is different from Iswara in that while he is supported and controlled by Iswara and exists solely for the fulfilment of His purposes and is besides weak, atomic and subject to ignorance, doubts, errors, sufferings and the like, being the abode of impurities, Iswara, of whom his self is an attribute, is, in every one of these respects, absolutely the opposite. From this

knowledge he becomes fit to desire the glory due to his essential nature (of rendering service to Bhagavan). He then realises the most important truths from the *Tirumantra* which is a concise summary of all that is needed. By an understanding of the significance of the third letter in its first word *aum*, namely, *m*, he realises that the self is essentially *Jnāna* or knowledge in its nature (and has knowledge also as an attribute.) By this realisation he gives up the notion of 'I' in regard to the body ( (i.e.) mistaking the body for 'I') and of 'mine' in regard to those things that are connected with the body. Similarly from the dative or the fourth case of the first syllable *a* where the dative termination has been dropped ( (*i.e.*) from *āya*), we should learn that the *Jīva* exists for Iswara and thereby, completely and without any trace, give up the erroneous notion implicit and explicit in the words 'I' and 'mine' in regard to the following:— the notion of 'I' in regard (even) to the soul as distinct from the body, that it is *s'esha* to oneself and the notion of 'mine' in regard to the attributes of the soul (such as this *jnāna* is mine). In this connection we should remember (Bhattar's) *s'loka* (written in the form of an imaginary dialogue between Iswara and the *Jīva* which reads as follows :— )

"*Bhagavān* : You are mine.

*The Jīva* : I exist (only) for myself.

*Bhagavān* : Where is it stated?

*The Jīva* : Where is the opposite stated?

*Bhagavān* : In the original *pramāna* : the Veda.

*The Jīva* : The opposite view is based on the strength of my own enjoyment of myself from beginningless time.

*Bhagavān* : But protests have been recorded then and there.

*The Jīva* : Where is it objected to? and by whom?

*Bhagavān* : The protest or objection was made in such works as the *Gītā* and it was made by me.

*The Jīva* : Is there any witness ?

*Bhagavān* : The wise man.

*The Jīva* : But he is an interested witness.

Thus in this dispute between Bhagavan and the *Jīva*, the need arises for an arbitrator."

With a knowledge of the meaning of *u* in *aum*, which means '*only*', we should root out the notion of 'I' in thinking "I am the *s'esha* of others (those other than Bhagavan) and the notion of 'mine' in thinking, "Another (and not Bhagavan) is my *s'eshī*." By an understanding of the negation contained in the middle word (*viz. namo, na mama*) which declares that there is no such thing as independence for the *Jīva*, we should rid ourselves of the notion of 'I' in thinking 'that in respect of the means of securing one's own protection, one is wholly independent' and the notion of 'mine' in thinking that this act or activity for securing protection is unconditionally 'one's.' By the force of this very negation (*na mama*), we should give up erroneous notions that may exist in regard to the fruit (of the *upāya*), which consists in future enjoyment (in Vaikunta) extending up to the service of the Lord, which is the meaning of the dative in the third word (*Nārāyaṇāya*) — erroneous notions of 'I' in thinking on the analogy of other fruits enjoyed here (in this world), "I will be the independent doer" and "I will be the enjoyer subject to no one else" and "*mine*" in thinking "I do this for myself" and "I enjoy this for myself". (These notions of 'I' and 'mine' in varied situations should be completely rooted out by considering the meanings, implicit and explicit, in the several words of the *Tirumantra*.) Thus one should become well established in right knowledge and should say to oneself in the words of the Alwars :— "Having

[1]enjoyed the pleasures of sense and found them petty, I have now given them up and found relief." "The [2]pleasures of the five senses in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting and, so also, the unlimited but inferior enjoyment of one's own self (*ātmānubhava*), which is not capable of being realised by the senses, have been given up by me." "When He is[3] gracious, what is there difficult of attainment? I have had enough of *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*. They are petty." 'The [4]fruits obtained by these weak-minded men are temporary and end after a short time.' "Having[5] come into this world which is not eternal and is full of misery, seek me as your refuge." "Having[6] heard of those who were mighty and valiant and of those who had immense treasures of wealth and who, after the lapse of some time, have left nothing behind them but tales of their lives, the wise man never considers as 'his', sons, wives, houses, land and the like, nor wealth". "The [7]world is all misery". "Even[8] in *Svarga*, since there is fear of a fall after the expiry of the ordained period, there is no happiness". "It is [9]only fools who hanker after kingdoms, thinking that they are theirs. Men like me never long for them, because they are not intoxicated by the strong liquor of egotism the sense of 'I')." "From the [10]mansion of Brahma downwards, O sage, these evils exist; therefore the wise never desire the attainment of Svarga." "Above [11]the mansion of Brahma, there lies the supreme world of Vishnu, which is pure, eternal, full of supreme splendour and is called 'the Supreme Brahman.' Fools, deluded by the pleasures of the senses and tormented by vanity, covetousness, arrogance, anger, perfidy and delusion never go to that world. Only good men without possessiveness and egotism, who remain indifferent to the pairs of opposites (like

1. Tiruvoymzhi: 3–2–6
2. Tiruvoymzhi: 4–9–10
3. Vishnupurana: 1–17–91
4. Bhagavad Gita: 7–23
5. Bhagavad Gita: 9-33
6. Vishnu Purana: 4–24, 142, 143
7. Vishnu Purana: 1–17- 69
8. Ibid: 6–5–50
9. Ibid: 6–7–7
10. Itihasa Samuchchayam: 4–49
11. Mahabharata - Aranya Parva: 262–37, 38, 39

pleasure and pain, heat and cold and the like), who have full control over their senses, and who are devoted to Yogic meditation go there." "In that [12]world are beautiful *vimānas* (airships) which can travel as they please, assembly halls, gardens of varied kinds, O king, and, likewise lotus tanks, full of pellucid water." "[13]Compared with that world of the Supreme Being, these lower worlds (of Brahma and Indra) are like hell." From these and other sayings, the *Jīva* should realise the seven kinds of evil inherent in the enjoyment of non-sentient things, *viz.* their littleness, their instability, their origin in pain, their being mingled with pain, their resulting ultimately in pain, their origin being due to a perverse egotism and their being opposed to the bliss which is his nature. He should also realise such of these evils as are inherent in the enjoyment of one's self, *ātmānubhava*. He should then realise, with clear vision, the unique character of the enjoyment of of the bliss of Bhagavan, which, in every one of these respects, is opposed to them. He would then attain the condition of [14]one who longs eagerly for the Supreme Being and who, consequently, is averse from things that are other than the Supreme Being. He would then abstain from activity whose characteristics Brahma is[15] said to have described (as leading to fruits other than *Moksha*) and embrace renunciation whose characteristics are said to have been described by the [16]sage Narayana (as leading to *Moksha*). It is only men of this type that can be described as competent aspirants for *mukti*. Even if a man knows clearly what is high and what is low among the *tatvas* and what is high and what is low among the aims and objects desired as the goal of life as explained above, if he does not adopt the *upāya* which can secure the supreme goal of life, after acquiring a distaste for other pleasures (*vairāgya*), he will be an object of ridicule like the dog whose tail does not hide its private parts nor drives flies and mosquitoes. His learning will be of no use to him. So has it been said:—

12. Mahabharata Santi Parva: 196-4
13. Ibid: 196-6
14. Barhaspatya Smriti:
15. } Mahabharata: 219-4-2
16. }

"Learning is [17]fruitful when it leads to purity of character and of conduct:" "The [18]*Sāstras* have been enjoined by wise men for securing serenity of mind. Therefore only he who has attained serenity of mind should be considered as having a knowledge of all the *sāstras*". Therefore, "men [19]should conduct themselves in a manner which will be in keeping with their age, with the duties which they undertake, with their goal in life, with their learning, and with their birth, so that their appearance, speech and action are all alike" — it is only these that will secure the glory described in passages like the following: when a man performs his duties, he is lauded by others. "The gods[20] consider him as a Brahmin who is clad in whatever rags he can obtain, eats whatever food comes to him and has his bed wherever he can find it;" "The gods[21] bow to him (who is free from the pairs of opposites, who has no attachment to anything in life and who ever delights in doing good to all beings").

*TAMIL VERSE:*

The wise man longs for *Moksha*, which is the supreme goal or aim of life, having conquered the senses by the grace of those *āchāryas* who have taught him of the eternal bliss of holding the feet of Bhagavan, who stands ever ready to redeem him, of the sea of *samsāra* whose essential nature is to perish and of that which is good and that which is evil.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

There may be born somewhere in this world some one who, being lucky and wise and desirous of obtaining release from *samsāra*, gives up the pleasures of external objects which are like honey mixed with poison and who, being averse, also, to the limited delight of realising or experiencing his self (*ātmānubhava*), longs for the enjoyment of the infinite bliss of Brahman.

---

17. Mahabharata Sabha Parva: 5-116
18. Itihasa Samucchaya: 12-37
19. Manu Smriti: 4-1-8
20. ?
21. Vishnudharmam: 43-28

# (8) THE CHAPTER ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF QUALIFIED PERSONS.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

Even though the desire for *moksha* is the same, a distinction arises among those who practise the *vidyās* or forms of meditation prescribed in the *s'rutis*, as a result of their respective qualifications or competence in regard to such *vidyās* as *Madhuvidyā*, *Sadvidyā* and so on. In the same way, a distinction arises between the adoption of *prapatti* and other *vidyās* (which are of the nature of *bhakti* or devout meditation), as a result of an unseen power or destiny depending on past *karma* which brooks no questioning.

[NOTE :— Some aspirants for *moksha* are qualified for *madhu vidya* and others for *sadvidya* as a result of their respective competence or special forms of aspiration. So also some are qualified for *prapatti*, while others are for *bhakti*.]

## *TWO KINDS OF ADHIKĀRIS:*

Among those who thus resort to the practice of the *dharmas* of renunciation as a means for the attainment of the supreme goal of life (namely *moksha*), there are two classes of qualified persons:- those who adopt *prapatti* as the sole and direct means and those to whom *prapatti* is auxiliary to the chief means, viz., *bhakti*. Both these are *prapannas*, one adopting *prapatti* as an independent means and the other adopting it as *anga* to *bhakti* Both of them are also called *bhaktas*, because *bhakti* is the *phala* or fruit for one and *sādhana* or means for the other.

NOTE:— *phala bhakti* means *bhakti* which arises as the fruit of *prapatti*, whereas *sadhana bhakti* is *bhakti* which leads to *moksha*.

Just as, according to the passage, "Ablution is prescribed in seven forms", (1) the utterance of a *mantra*; (2) the mental process; (3) celestial ablution; (4) ablution by air and so on, are held as different and equally effective kinds of ablution in regard to those who are qualified for those respective forms, the forms known as

*Uktinishtā* (by one's utterance) and *āchārya nishtā* (that done by the *āchārya* on one's behalf) and varieties of *prapatti*.

*UKTINISHTĀ* :

Of these, that done by one's utterance (*uktinishṭā*) is as follows: Those who have no clear knowledge of auxiliaries (*anga*), such as the determination to do what is agreeable (to the Lord), but who possess the qualification of knowing that, without the Lord, they have no other means (*akinchanya*) and who have also the faith (*viswāsa*) that He will grant salvation if prayed to — they pronounce, before the Saviour, the sentence taught to them by their *āchāryas*, which will be considered by the Lord as equivalent to perfect *prapatti*; they say :— "May my salvation be Thy burden or responsibility ![1]" They are like the ignorant children of feudatory princes who seek the protection of the emperor by repeating the words taught to them by their nurses. If a little boy who does not understand the meaning of words and sentences says, once, "Madam, give me food as alms", it meets with immediate and favourable response in the houses of good men who are well-to do. In the same way, it has been said, [1]"The Lord, whose wealth never suffers any diminution, however much He may give, will also grant whatever is prayed for". Since He is supremely rich and generous, even this utterance or *ukti* will never be fruitless. In the case of those who are ignorant and who depend entirely on this utterance, the compassion of the Lord, who is the refuge of all, cannot ignore even this mere utterance (as it cannot digest it); for it has been said, "Whatever[2] may be the manner or form, you have uttered the *Dvaya Mantra*. Therefore your redemption is my responsibility." This truth has been stated by those who are well versed (in the *Sāstras*) in such *slokas* as the following: "Though[3] I am a sinner, it will not become Thee, who art the Lord of all, to neglect me when I utter the words stating that I seek Thy refuge." "This [4]speech of mine expressing the thought that I seek refuge under Thee is not uttered

1. Tiruvoymozhi: 3. 9, 5.
2. Saranagati gadya :
3. Atimanushastava : 61
4. Varadarajastava: 84

with all my mind and with all my heart. I can be saved only if even this mere utterance will secure Thy compassion." "I long[4A] to see Thee by merely uttering the words of *prapatti* — Thee who canst not be attained by *bhakti*." The state of one who performs *prapatti* by utterance (*ukti*), and that of one who depends solely on the *āchārya* have both been described in the same *s'loka* as follows :— "I have been made Thy responsibility by my *āchāryas* who follow the way of *dharma*. I have *also* (myself) uttered the word seeking refuge. Taking this into consideration, O, Lord of Srirangam, make me Thy burden or responsibility" The word *api* (also) in the *s'loka* indicates that any one of the two will suffice.

*ĀCHĀRYANISHṬĀ* :

Of the two, the one who depends solely on the *āchārya* is included in the *āchārya's* own *prapatti* as part of it, for it has been laid down in *S'āndilya Smriti* and other treatises as follows: "He should also state thus : "This is [5A]my son, my servant, my disciple (who is to be saved)". It has been said: "There [6]may be doubts concerning (the redemption of) those that serve Achyuta, but there is absolutely no doubt about the (redemption) of those who delight in the service of His devotees". So, in the case of those who depend solely on the *āchārya*, there is no doubt at all concerning the fruition of *prapatti*, by the principle of "How much more, then" (*kaimutika nyāya*).

Mudali Andan said: "When a lion leaps from one hill to another, the little creatures (like bugs and lice) on his body are also taken over from that hill to the other. So also when the author of *Sri Bhashya* performed *prapatti* (the surrender of his responsibility or *bhara*), we *too have been saved (by that act)

4A. Varadarajastava: 92
5. Sri Rangarajastava: 2 - 102
5A. Sandilya Smriti: 3 - 75
6. Sandilya Smriti: 1 - 95

* NOTE:— This is interpreted in two different ways by the southern school of Visishtadvaitins and the northern school The former hold that since Sri Ramanuja has already performed *prapatti*, even his followers of a later day who acknowledge him as their *acharya* will benefit by it and they need not perform *prapatti*; the latter hold, on the other hand, that only those who were his *sishyas* then would benefit by it.

owing to our intimate connexion with him." We, too, have expressed this idea in *Nyāsa Tilāka* as follows :— " The blind man walks on being led by one who is not blind; the lame man is taken (across the stream) by the boatman, being placed within the boat; the children of the king's servants enjoy the pleasures (of the palace), although they do not know the king. So also my *āchārya*, who is compassionate, is capable of making me attain Thee, O Lord of Srirangam" It comes to this that the Lord of all will not be gracious enough to grant us the supreme goal of existence, unless *prapatti* is performed in some manner or other and by some one or other.

The favour of Bhagavatas, residence in holy places and the like are not direct and independent means for attaining *moksha*. (It is true that we find such passages as the following in the Sastras):— " Whether[7] it be a beast or a man or a bird — those who are held by Bhagavatas as their own will go to the supreme abode of Vishnu for that very reason ". " We, [8]who live in your territories, should be protected by you, for you are our king, O ruler of men, whether you are in the town or in the forests". "All the beings[9] in Ayodhya which contained (many) good regions — whether they were beings that moved or beings that could not move - he enabled them (all) to acquire nobility of nature ". The nobility was that of feeling delight in the company of Sri Rama and grief in separation from him. "The[10] strength that lies in living in places where Thou hast temples is the strength that enables a man to attain *moksha*". (From these passages, it might appear, at first sight, that the favour of Bhagavatas or God's devotees and the fact of living in places belonging to the Lord would lead of themselves to the supreme goal.) But even here there is always some connexion with either *prapatti* by one's own utterance or *prapatti* through the *āchārya* or *bhakti* or *prapatti*

7. Bharadwaja Smriti :
8. Ramayana : Aranya Kanda : 1 - 20
9. Tiruvoymozhi : 7 - 5 - 1
10. Perialwar Tirumozhi : 5- 1 - 3

which existed before or *bhakti* or *prapatti* which followed. It may be asked how this could be. (The answer is as follows:—) They will lead to *bhakti* or *prapatti*. In the case of one who has already adopted *bhakti* or *upāsanā*, they will promote the further development of the *upāya* or means. In the case of one who has performed *prapatti* as an independent means, they will promote the eagerness for service while in this world. It is in this way they render help.

### *DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BHAKTI AND PRAPATTI IN SECURING THE GOAL:*

Among these, he who has adopted *prapatti* as the means to *bhakti* is capable, like Vyasa and others, of other means or *upāyas* than *prapatti* and is therefore not absolutely helpless (*akinchana*). Since he can bear delay (in attaining *moksha*), he is not averse to other interests (in life). He will attain *moksha* only at the expiry of the *karma* which has already begun to yield fruit (*prārabdha*), when he will have the intense thought of the last moment before death. Since the primary *upāya* or means (*angī*) which he has chosen is *upāsana* or *bhakti*, he attains the fruit thereof, namely, *moksha*, when it is performed fully and in accordance with the rules and injunctions prescribed for it. On the other hand, *prapatti* adopted as the primary or direct means (*angī*) is open to all *adhikāris*, is capable of averting all hindrances (to *moksha*), can further the attainment of all that is desired, is easy of performance, has to be performed only once, can bring about the fulfilment (of what is aimed at) quickly and will not countenance any opposition or obstacle. Like the missile, Brahmastra, it will not tolerate the adoption of any other means or *upāya* for attaining the fruit. The man who has resorted to *prapatti* as the direct and independent means will have no hindrances at all in the way of his attaining the perfect enjoyment (of the bliss of Bhagavan). Therefore from the moment of the performance of *prapatti*, there is nothing in the way of his attaining *moksha* but his own desire to live till the death

of this body so that he may enjoy such things as the rendering of service with this body to the images of the Lord (*archā*) to which he has an attachment. So his *moksha* has to await only the death of this body and will consist in the rendering, in Vaikunta, of perfect and full service which has begun even here in the performance of service limited by the conditions of place, time and the nature of bodily life (*svarūpa*). The state of the *prapanna* who is prepared to continue in this world till the dissolution of the body is referred to in passages like the following:— "What is there[11] wrong in us who go about here having already won the grace of being permitted tc serve Thee?" "Leaving this bliss of [12]uttering Thy names, I do not want even the bliss of going to Paramapada and ruling over it." "Can[13] I indeed give up the hare and go in pursuit of the crow!" (That is — it would be foolish to give up hare's flesh which is excellent as food and go after crow's flesh. So also the service of the image here in temples is superior even to the bliss of serving the Lord in *Paramapada*). "My deep love to Thee, [14]O King, is always staunch. So also my devotion to Thee, O valiant Sire, is always firm. Nowhere else can my mind turn". (In these words Hanuman expresses his love and devotion to Sri Rama and states that this love and devotion are greater towards Rama than even to the Lord of Paramapada).

*Since the Supreme Ruler is the giver of all things, and since *prapatti* at His feet is capable of yielding all kinds of fruit, it becomes the means of securing whatever fruit is desired respectively by these two (*bhakta* and *prapanna*). The *Sāstras* say, "Ask [15]any boon that you want, when I am in the range of one's vision, all (good) things will follow." "O Thou that [16]hast

11. Tiruvoymozhi: 8–10–4
12. Tirumalai: 2
13. Tirumangai Alwar: Siriya Tirumadal:
14. Ramayana: Uttara Kanda: 40–15
15. Vishnu Purana 1 - 12 - 76 (said by the Lord to Dhruva)
16. Vishnu Purana 1 - 12 - 79 (said by Dhruva to the Lord)

NOTE:— The sentence means that the 'direct' *prapanna* gets *moksha* which he desires and the *prapanna* who performs *prapatti* for the sake of *bhakti* gets *bhakti* which he desires, for *prapatti* can secure whatever is desired.

created all the worlds ! Is there anything that is difficult to obtain, when Thou art pleased?" "When[17] He is graciously disposed, is there any thing here that cannot be obtained?" "What is [18]there in this world or in the world above, O Dalbhya, that cannot be accomplished by those men whose minds are directed towards Vishnu?". "The fruit is from Him. It stands to reason". (*Brahma Sūtras* 3 - 2 - 37). *Bhakti* or *upāsana* is the means of securing the four kinds of objects that may be desired in accordance with one's aim as stated in the *Bhagavad Gītā* (7 - 16). "Four types of men who have performed meritorious deeds worship me :— He who has lost his wealth and is anxious to recover it, he who wants to have a vision of his own self (*ātmā*) and to enjoy it (*ātmānubhava*), he who wants to acquire wealth anew, and he who is a *Jnānī*, who desires to be for ever with the Lord and practises *bhakti* for attaining Him." Similarly have not the great *rishis* declared that *prapatti* is also the means of attaining the four kinds of objects or aims as is stated in the *sloka* :— "Only[19] so long as one does not perform *prapatti* to Thee that canst destroy all sins, will there be the anxiety to recover lost wealth, only so long will there be the desire to acquire new wealth, only so long will there be the absence of the enjoyment of one's self as something different from the body; only so long will there be the sorrow of *samsāra*". From the words "that destroyest all sins" and the repetition of "only so long" repeated in every case with great consideration, it is made clear that the fruit which is desired by the man will all become his, in accordance with his desire and at the very time when he desires to have it. It is in consideration of this superior efficacy of *prapatti* that it is stated (in *Lakshmī Tantra* 17 — 62) as follows:— "Those who practise *Jnāna Yoga* and *Bhakti Yoga* with a pure mind and those who perform *karma* which would discipline the soul in renunciation are not worth even one ten-millionth part of the man who has

17. Vishnu Purana 1 - 17 - 91
18. Vishnu Dharma 43 - 46
19. Vishnu Purana 1 - 9 - 73

performed *prapatti*. The difference in the kinds of service done here (in this life) by the *prapanna* is due to the difference in the desire of the *prapanna* and that difference in the desire is due to the difference in the meritorious deeds of the past which have begun to operate in this life (*Prārabdha karma*). There will be no difference at all in the bliss that will be attained after casting off the last body.

### *THE BLISS IN MOKSHA IS THE SAME FOR BOTH.*

Entire dependence on the Lord is uniformly the same for all. For it is stated in *Vishnu Tatvam*:— "Having understood his absolute dependence on the Supreme Person, he gets rid of the bondage due to past *karma*, attains peerless independence and enjoys bliss with him." It has been declared (by the Bhashyakara in the chapter on the Goal (Chapter IV of the *Brahma Sūtras*) that this independence which is said to be acquired in the final stage of attainment (i.e.) *moksha* is *fitness to render every kind of service to the Lord without being subject to past *karma*.

### *TAMIL VERSE:*

Those who desire to attain the bliss of Bhagavan realise that the supreme aim of life is *moksha* and that there are two *upāyas* or means attaining it, one prolonged and the other quick which depend on their luck. They adopt one of these two *upāyas* and find that, for getting rid of the hindrances caused by past *karma*, there is no other way than seeking the feet of Mukunda for refuge.

### *SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

Mukunda does not vouchsafe His abode to any one other than the *prapanna*. The *prapanna* is of two kinds, namely, he who adopts *prapatti* as the sole and independent means and he who adopts *prapatti* as the auxiliary means to *bhākti* or *upāsana* and this difference is due to difference in the fruition of their good

* Brahma Sutras: 4-4-8

deeds. He who adopts *prapatti* as an auxiliary to *bhakti* will attain *moksha* after much delay caused by the need to expiate past *karma* (in one or several bodies), but will have the happiness of devout worship in this world for a long time. He to whom *prapatti* is the sole and independent means will attain *moksha* quickly (*i.e.*) at the end of this life itself, but his happiness of serving the Lord in this world will be limited and of short duration.

## (9) THE CHAPTER ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF THE MEANS OR *UPĀYA* FOR ATTAINING *(MUKTI)*.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA.*

Bhagavan is declared in the Upanishads to be Himself the means (*upāya*) of attaining Him. The ways of *bhakti* and *prapatti* are indicated for winning His grace. The adoption of these *ways is the result of the great ripening of meritorious deeds (done in the past) and, even for this, Bhagavan, who has the ability to create everything, is Himself the cause.

NOTE :—**These ways*: The commentary *Saraswadini* says that the Sanskrit word *Gati* does not mean here ways or *upayas* but forms of knowledge.

### *UPĀYA AND UPEYA:*

The means or *upāya* to be adopted by them (*i. e.*) the seekers after *mukti*) is a special kind of expansion of knowledge. The *upeya* or object of attainment which can be realised by this means is another special kind of expansion of knowledge. Of these, the special kind of expansion of knowledge which is the means requires the help of instruments of knowledge (*karana*) and has been prescribed in the *Sāstras* It has for its object Brahman who is always endowed with the five attributes like *satyam,* (*satyam, jnānam, anantam, ānandam, amalatvam*) which define His essential nature or substance (*svarūpa*), along with the qualities associated invariably with the respective *vidya* or form of meditation. The object of attainment (*upeya*) which is a special kind of expansion of knowledge does not require any instruments of knowledge. It is the natural heritage of the *jīvātmā* and has for its object Brahman perfect with all qualities and glorious possessions (*vibhūtis*).

*SLOKA:*

The principle of *tatkratu* states only that the qualities (and forms) meditated upon would not be excluded in the attainment.

it does not exclude other qualities (and forms). Service to the Lord is also the object of attainment (*upeya*) as it is the over-flow of the experience (of Bhagavan) which is attained.

NOTE:— The principle of *tatkratu* or *tatkratu nyaya* is to the effect that in whatever form or manner and with whatever qualities one meditates on God — in that very form and with those very qualities will one attain Him. Though service to the Lord is not specifically prescribed in a *vidya*, it will be attained after *mukti*.

### *BHAGAVĀN IS BOTH UPĀYA AND UPEYA:*

Iswara is the object of the knowledge which is the means, *upāya*, and is also the object of the knowledge which is attainment: He is the means or *Upāya* as being the giver of the (desired) fruit and, likewise, He is *Upeya* because He is Himself the object that is to be enjoyed. In the case of the *mumukshu* who has adopted *prapatti* as the sole and independent means, Iswara takes the place of other *upāyas*. In the case of others also (i. e.) those who adopt *bhakti*, Iswara whose favour has been won by *prapatti* (adopted as an auxiliary means to *bhakti*) intervenes and, standing in the place of rites and duties which are too hard for them in those situations which lie between the beginning of *karma yoga* and the completion of the (prescribed) meditation, brings about the removal of sins and the manifestation of *satvam* which can result from their performance. He sees to it that the meditation or worship which has been adopted as an *upāya* is so completed as to bear fruit.

### *KARMA YOGA:*

*Karma Yoga* means the performance of certain kinds of *karma* or rites and duties as the result of knowledge acquired from the *s'āstras* in regard to the true nature of the *Jīvātma* and the *Paramātmā*. The rites and duties consist of the following: (1) *nitya karma* or regular duties to be performed compulsorily (like the daily *sandhyā vandana*) (2) *naimittika karma* or rites to be compulsorily performed on specific occasions (like the eclipse

of the sun or the moon) and (3) such *kāmya karmās* or rites as are optional and as have been chosen to be within one's ability. Though these *kāmya* rites are ordained for obtaining certain specified fruits like *svarga*, they have to be performed without any desire for those fruits. All these rites and duties, 1, 2 and 3, have to be performed regularly and in accordance with the prescribed rules by the Karma-yogin.

This *karma yoga* has several sub-divisions described in the *s'lokas* beginning with "Some perform the rites or sacrifices (*Yajna*) which are of the nature of the worship of the Gods" (*Bhagavad Gītā* IV 25.) They include such (items) as the adoration of the gods, the performance of austerities (*tapas*), pilgrimage to sacred places, giving in charity, and sacrifices.

In the same way as, in accordance with the differences of competence, *prapatti* becomes the means of attaining *mukti*, either through *bhakti* or directly by itself and without the intervention of *bhakti*, so also *karma yoga*, either through *Jnāna Yoga* or without it, becomes the means of having a vision of one's self or soul (*ātmāvalokana*), the contemplation of one's own self or *ātmā* with the help of yogic auxiliaries like *yama* (self-restraint), *niyama* (observance of rites) and *prānāyama* (the control of the breath).

*JNĀNĀ YOGA*:

*Jnāna Yoga* is the constant and uninterrupted contemplation, by one who has conquered his mind by *karma-yoga*, of his *svarūpa* or essential nature or the self as being distinct from matter, (the body, the senses and the like) — his *svarūpa* which is the mode or *prakāra* of Iswara in virtue of its relation to Him as His body or *s'arīra*. The self is the body of Iswara (as has been already pointed out) because it is supported and controlled by Him and serves His purposes.

If a person has succeeded in attaining to a vision of his self *ātmāvalokana*) by the practice of *yoga* preceded by *karma yoga*

and *Jnāna yoga* and if he escapes the snare of being (permanently) attracted by the pleasure of enjoying this vision which is so great as to create a distaste for all sense-pleasures — then he begins the practice of *bhaktiyoga* which is (the direct) means for the attainment of the supreme goal of enjoying Bhagavan. While practising *bhaktiyoga*, the aspirant contemplates on Bhagavan as the Inner Self, or *antaryāmin* of his own self which is His body. The vision that he has (already) acquired of his own pure self is then useful, for it is only through it that he reaches its Inner Self, just as the cloth within which a gem is tied up is first to be seen before the gem itself can be seen. In this way the vision of one's self serves as a qualification for the practice of *bhakti yoga*.

*BHAKTI YOGA:*

*Bhakti yoga* is the special form of meditation which is of the nature of unsurpassed love and which has, for its object, the essential nature and the like (form, qualities, etc.) of Bhagavan who is not dependent on any one else, who is not subject to the authority of any one else and who does not exist for the fulfilment of the purposes of any one else. *Bhakti* is of the form of a continuous stream of knowledge which is of the nature of uninterrupted memory like oil streaming down continuously; it has clearness similar to that of visual perception; it grows from strength to strength by being practised every day until the day of journey to *Paramapada* and terminates in the remembrance of the last moment. The performance of the rites and duties of one's *varna* and *ās'rama* is auxiliary to it (*bhaktiyoga*), as it dispels sins that cause *rajas* and *tamas*, which, like weeds, impede the growth of *satvam* so necessary for the expansion of knowledge. This *bhakti yoga* is also a means or *sādhana* in accordance with the specific desire of the *sādhaka*, for acquiring lordship (in this world or in *svarga*) and other fruits (like *kaivalya*). This is calculated to strengthen the faith of the weak-minded as stated in the *s'loka*; "Worldly[1] benefits have also been mentioned as arising from

1. Satvata Samhita

*bhakti-yoga.* They produce confidence in the attainment of *mukti* ( by verifying what is stated in the *s'āstra* from the example of these worldly benefits ). This idea is expressed in the *s'loka* in the *Gītā* ( 7 - 16 ) which says : " Four kinds of persons worship me etc." The superiority of the *Jnānī* which is stated there in the words, " Among them, the *Jnānī* is the best because he desires to be always with Bhagavan and is devoted solely and exclusively to Him " is thus described by Bhagavan Himself :— " Four [2]kinds of people are my men. They are all devotees (*bhaktas*). Of them they who worship me alone exclusively are the best, for they do not approach other deities. They perform the prescribed rites and duties without caring for their fruits and desire to attain me alone. The other three kinds of devotees desire ( worldly ) fruits which have an end and they are subject to lapses. The wise man who worships me with sole and exclusive devotion attains *moksha.*"

*Bhakti yoga* which has thus been prescribed as the means of obtaining *moksha* has been called *parabhakti.* Love of the Lord which results from intimacy with *sāttvikas* (and the scriptures) and which produces *parabhakti* is also called *bhakti*, because it generates an eager desire to know Iswara with perfect clearness. It has been said :— " Owing to [3]my devotion to the Lord and to my *gurus*, I have attained spiritual purity and come to know Janardana with the help of the *s'āstras.*" ( So *parabhakti* is born successively of a knowledge of the truth obtained from the *s'āstras* which leads to *karma yoga* and the like). It (*parabhakti*) produces in its turn an eager desire and determination to see the Lord and makes the man cry out as follows :— " O Lord, [4]who art the abode of attributes like *jnāna*, be pleased to show Thy whole self !" " Vouchsafe[5] Thy grace so that I may see Thee " : " May I [6]see Thee some day ! " By this keen desire alone, he wins the grace of Bhagavan who rewards him with a perfect visual perception

2. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 350 — ( 33 - 35 )
3. Mahabharata: Udyogaparva: ( 8-5
4. Bhagavad Gita: 11-4
5. Tiruvoymozhi: 8-1-1
6. Tiruvoymozhi: 6-9-4

of himself for the time being. This visual perception is called *parajnāna*. From this perfect vision of the *svarūpa* of the Lord is born an excessive and unsurpassed love for the Lord similar to that felt by a man suffering from great thirst at the sight of a tank. This (excessive and unsurpassed love for the Lord) is called *parama bhakti*. *Parama bhakti* produces an eager desire and determination to enjoy the Lord without any limitations, as the *bhakta* feels that it is impossible to live any longer without this experience of the Lord as described in the *Tiruvoymozhi* 10 - 10 - 1 (where the Alwar cries out that he will not hereafter allow the Lord to leave him) and that he must become one with the Lord and declares all this with an oath that cannot be ignored by the Lord. It causes (likewise) an excessive eagerness in the Lord to give him *moksha* immediately and makes him attain *moksha* after quenching his great thirst for union.

NOTE :— *Bhakti* leads through *yoga* to *para-bhakti* which leads to *para-jnana*, which, in its turn, leads to *parama-bhakti*.

*BHAKTI AND PRAPATTI :*

(*Prapatti* stands in the place of *para bhakti* to the man who adopts it as the direct and independent means). Since *bhakti yoga* is not suitable for those who do not belong to the three higher castes and (likewise) also for those in these three castes who are wanting in *jnāna* or *ability* or both and since it will not suit those who cannot endure any delay in the attainment of its fruit (namely, *moksha*) and are therefore extremely impatient, *prapatti* is prescribed as the sole and independent means of *moksha* for them. Since it will be the means of securing all desired objects, it has been prescribed in the place of *para bhakti* for those who know their limitations. Just as in the case of the man who practises the *vidyās*, *para bhakti* is followed by (certain) stages of attainment (like *para jnāna*), this *prapatti* will be followed by certain favourable results or states in accordance with the desire of the man who adopts it as the independent *upāya*. These states are to be considered as part of the fruits of *prapatti*.

Thus *prapatti* and *bhakti* are said to be optional in relation to those who are qualified for them as they secure the same final goal or fruit.

*BHAKTI IS DIFFERENT FROM PRAPATTI :*

That the two are different from each other is evident from the *adhikarana* or section. "The Brahma Vidyas are different as their *names and the like are different". *Brahma sūtras* (III - 3 - 56). That there is option (to choose any of them) is also evident from the section : "There is option (to adopt any of them) because the result or (final) fruit is the same". *Brahma sūtras* (III - 3 - 57).

It may be seen that, as in *upāsanās* there are differences in *mantras* and the like (*angas*), there are, in Nyasa Vidya also, differences stated in the different branches of the *vedas* (*S'ākhas*) and in the different *samhitās* of the *āgamas* Just as obeisance (*namaskāra*) is divided into three forms, verbal, mental and bodily, so *prapatti*, too, is said to be of different kinds owing to the excess of one or other of these differences. It has been stated by some that, just as obeisance becomes complete when all the three, verbal, mental and bodily are combined, *prapatti*, too, becomes complete when verbal and bodily actions are combined with mental states or *jnāna*. This statement of theirs should be understood as meaning that mental *prapatti* is full and complete and that verbal and bodily activities are, as it were, the overflow of the mental *prapatti* (*jnāna*). (It should not be taken to mean that *prapatti* is incomplete when verbal and bodily actions are absent). We have already stated that all these are productive of the desired result or fruit in accordance with the competency of those who adopt them.

---

NOTE: — * Commentators of *Brahma sutras* like Sudarsana Bhatta point out that this difference in names applies specially to *nyasa*, since it is a different word from 'contemplate', 'meditate', and 'adore' which are used in connection with the other *vidyas* and which mean the same thing, whereas *nyasa* has a different meaning (altogether).

*TAMIL VERSE:*

They are Brahmins who know the following :— (1) *Karma Yoga* as suited to one's state (*viz. varna, ās'rama* and the like); (2) *Jnāna Yoga* adopted with keen intelligence on account of its beneficial results: (3) *Bhakti Yoga* adopted by those with an inner vision which is delightful and (4) *Prapatti* which yields immediate fruit by the grace of God to those who are destitute of the qualifications (for the other three) and who cannot endure delay in attaining *moksha.*

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

*Karma, Jnāna, Upāsana* (*bhakti*) and likewise *s'aranāgati* are the good ways prescribed in the Vedas for securing *moksha*; of these some are indirect and auxiliary means (namely, *karma* and *jnāna*) while the others, *bhakti* and *s'aranāgati* are direct and independent *upāyas* for *mukti.* Of these, some (*i.e. karma* and *jnāna*), have only one form (that of being indirect and auxiliary means); *bhakti* has only one form (that of being the direct and independent means for *mukti,* while *s'araṇāgati* or *prapatti* has two forms, that of being an indirect and auxiliary means as leading to *bhakti* and also that of being the direct and independent means or *upāya* for obtaining *mukti.* The wise (who know the *s'āstras*), having understood well the difference among these *upāyas* due to their having this single or twofold nature, delight in the last words (*charamasloka*) of the charioteer who is the Saviour of all, (*i.e.*) they prefer *s'araṇāgati*).

## (10) THE CHAPTER ON *FITNESS FOR PRAPATTI.*

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

Fitness (for *Bhakti* or *Prapatti*) consists in a combination of desire (for the fruits of a course of action) and of ability which is threefold. This fitness of man is differentiated as consisting in conditions prescribed for the *yoga* of eight *angas* or auxiliaries (*bhakti yoga*) and for the *yoga* of six *angas* or auxiliaries (*prapatti*). That Bhagavan is the refuge or Saviour of all has been declared in the *s'ruti* and confirmed in the *smritis* In adopting this righteous path *viz., prapatti*, there is competence for all as in the matter of speaking the truth and such other injunctions as are ordained in the Vedas (for all men without any difference of caste or *ās'rama*).

(Those who are not of the three higher castes are prohibited from the performance of certain rites and duties ordained in the *s'rutis*, but this prohibition does not apply to such injunctions as "speak the truth", and "look upon your mother as divine" etc. which are also ordained in the Vedas. So also *prapatti*, though prescribed in the Vedas, is open to all castes).

### *THE MEANING OF COMPETENCY OR ADHIKĀRA :*

It is necessary that one should know the special qualifications and the like required in a person who intends to adopt *nyāsa vidyā* (*prapatti*) without any desire for the other *upāyas* in the quest for the goal that is desired. Competency (*adhikāra*) consists in

---

NOTE 1 :— Ability which is threefold :— The ability to understand the meaning of *sastras* : the ability to perform what is ordained in them and the competence as laid down in the *sastras* according to caste, qualities and the like.

NOTE 2 :— *Bhakti Yoga* : *Bhakti Yoga* is called the *ashtanga yoga*, because its eight angas are *yama, niyama*, etc. *Prapatti* is called *shadanga yoga*, because its six *angas* are such as *anukulya sankalpa, prathikulya varjanam, mahavisvasam, akinchanyam, etc.*, to be described later.

the attribute of desiring the end on the part of the person who adopts an *upāya* for the sake of a certain desired result and also ability to adopt it. Ability means the capacity to understand the meaning of the *s'āstras* and the capacity to perform what is ordained therein and, likewise, fitness or competency in accordance with what is prescribed in the *s'āstras*, such as, caste, quality and the like (*āchāra - samskāra*). This competency exists already (before the adoption of the *upāya*). To the man who has this competency, what is stated to be the object to be obtained by the means, is the desired result or fruit. *Upāya* is the means prescribed or ordained for securing that fruit or result. The person who has become desirous of *mukti* (*mumukshu*) and who adopts the special *upāya* for *moksha* called direct and independent *prapatti* should have, in common with the *upāsaka* (who has adopted *bhakti*), a knowledge obtained from the *s'āstras* of such things as the relationship (between *Jīvātmā* and *Paramātmā* as that between the body and the soul) and he should have in addition, the special qualifications of *ākinchanya* and *ananyagatitva*; *ākinchanya* means the absence (in a person) of the ability for other *upāyas*. *Ananyagatitvam* means an aversion to all other interests (than *moksha*) and a turning away from all other refuge than Bhagavan. The latter is implicit in the former, namely, aversion to all other interests. This may be seen from such passages as the following :— " Wise [1]men never worship Brahma, Rudra and others who are called gods, for the boons that they could grant are limited."

If, without an eager and impatient desire for immediate *moksha*, a person who wants such things as the continuance of the body (or the continuance of the worship of *archāvatāra*) adopts *prapatti* for the sake of *moksha*, his *mukti* will be delayed in proportion to these other interests.

1. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 350–36

### *ĀKINCHANYA AND ANANYAGATITVA:*

*Ākinchanya* and *Ananyagatitva* are conditioned by the ignorance of and inability to adopt other *upāyas* on the part of the person adopting this means, as also his inability to endure delay in attaining *mukti*. His turning away from other saviours than Bhagavan is conditioned by his conviction of the absolute dependence on Bhagavan alone, which is common to himself and to others (including other deities than the Lord), as is stated in the *s'loka*: "Just as, O [2]Bharata, tips of grass are entirely subject to (the force of) the wind, even so are all beings subject to the sway of the Lord", and it is conditioned also by his aversion to other interests than *mukti*.

### *THE PRAMAṆAS IN SUPPORT:*

The nature of the specific competency for *prapatti* is evident from the following authoritative passages and from spiritual tradition: "Having[3] been abandoned by his own father (Indra), the gods and the great sages, he, (*i.e.*) Kakasura, wandered about the three worlds and finally took refuge under Rama alone", "I am[4] the abode of all transgressions; I have no means or *upāya* to save myself and I have nothing else to attain besides Thee"; "I seek[5] the refuge of Thy feet, O *S'araṇya* (Saviour): I have no other *upāya* and nothing else to attain than Thee": "[6]Finding that there is no *upāya* for leaping over *samsāra* even in all the endless future, etc": "I [7]who am aware that there is no *upāya* for me in all the thousands of crores of *kalpas* other than performing *prapatti* at Thy two lotus-like feet", and, "I who have no[8] other refuge and no other saviour etc."

### *PRAPATTI IS OPEN TO ALL:*

If such qualifications exist, *prapatti* is certainly open to all as an *upāya*, since there are no restrictions to it such as caste.

2. Mahabharata: Udyoga Parva: 30-29
3. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 38-33
4 Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-30
5. Alavandar: Stotram: 22
6. Sriranga Gadyam
7. Vaikunta Gadyam
8. Tiruvoymozhi: 6-10-10

*TAMIL VERSE:*

The devotees of the Lord (Acharyas) have themselves understood and have made us (also) understand the eternal Lord who is the origin of all things and who is anxious to save us, being full of the might of mercy, so that all persons from the Brahmin to the Chandala and especially those who feel most the sufferings of *samsāra* may, in their helplessness and without seeking any other saviour or any other fruit, approach Him and seek refuge under Him.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

(1) Inability to adopt such *upāyas* as *Bhakti yoga*, (2) ignorance of the required knowledge; (3) prohibition by the *s'āstras* of the adoption of such means and (4) inability to endure any delay in attaining *mukti* :— these four, occuring either singly* or in combinations of two, three or four, by virtue of *adrishta* (resulting from meritorious deeds performed in the past) are qualifications of varied kinds for the performance of direct and independent *prapatti* to the Lord of Lakshmi and good men resort to it with these qualifications and free from all doubt for the attainment of *mukti.*

---

NOTE :— * Those who have only one of these four are of four classes, those who have any two of them are of six, those who have any three are of four and those who have all the four form one.

## (11) THE CHAPTER ON THE CLASSIFICATION OF ACCESSORIES OR *ANGAS*:

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

*Prapatti* to Bhagavan which is of the nature of *bharanyāsa* (the surrender to the Lord of the responsibility of one's protection) is ordained in such *sāstras* as the Vedas as having certain distinctive accessories or *angas*, which are of a certain specific nature and of a certain specific extent and it is to be necessarily performed and only once to *Bhagavān*, who is the celestial ocean of mercy who controls the whole universe from within it and who is already bent on the destruction of *samsāra*.

### *THE ANGAS OR ACCESSORIES OF PRAPATTI*:

The accessories or *angas* of this *vidyā* (*nyāsavidyā* or *prapatti*) are the following: the intention or will to do (thereafter) whatever is agreeable (to the Lord), the avoidance of whatever is displeasing (to Him), helplessness (*kārpaṇya*), supreme faith, and supplication or seeking His protection.

It has (sometimes) been said that *saraṇāgati* is [1]of six kinds:— intention to do whatever is pleasing (to the Lord) (*ānukūlyasankalpa*), the avoidance of whatever is displeasing to Him (*prātikūlyavarjanam*), the faith that He will afford protection (*mahāvisvāsa*), begging His protection (*goptritvavaraṇa*), the surrender of the self (*ātmanikshepa*) and the feeling of helplessness (*kārpaṇya*). It is stated to be six-fold in this and other passages by the inclusion of the *angī*, namely *prapatti* or self-surrender among its *angas* or accessories as in the word *ashtānga yoga*.

NOTE :— (*Ashtanga Yoga* is really *dhyanayoga*. It is said to consist of *yama*, *niyama*, *asana*, *pranayama*, *pratyahara*, *dhyana*, *dharana* and *samadhi*, *Samadhi* which is the *angi* is included among its *angas* or accessories ).

---

1. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37–18

That one of these is *angī* and that the others are *angas* are evident from the following sloka and (this does not require any argument): "*Nyāsa* or [2]self-surrender which has the word *nikshepa* for a synonym has five *angas* and is called also *sannyāsa*, *tyāga* and *śaranāgati*." In the *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā*, it is stated as follows :— "The *prapatti*[2A] that I perform to the Lord is itself eternal fruition to me: I desire no other fruit than this. This absence of the desire for any other fruit (than *prapatti*) is itself considered as the chief *anga*. The desire for the fruit is opposed to this." This other *anga* (described in the *Ahi. Samhitā*), namely, the absence of any desire for ulterior results or fruit is essential in the surrender of the self for the sake of *moksha*, (and not in every form of *prapatti*). The giving up of all attachment to the fruit or consequence and also of the thought of one's doership is common to all forms of renunciation such as *karma yoga*. This thought or reflection should therefore be entertained by the person desirous of *moksha*, at the time of his surrender of His self to the Lord with all the *angas*.

## 1 & 2. *ĀNUKŪLYA SANKALPA AND PRĀTIKŪLYA VARJANAM*:

Among these *angas*, the essential condition for the will to do what is pleasing (to the Lord) (*ānukūlya sankalpa*) and the avoidance of what would be displeasing to Him, (*prātikūlya-varjanam*) is the knowledge that the person exists solely for the Lord of Lakshmi for whom all things and all beings exist and should therefore do whatever would please Him by performance and by abstention from performance. From this it follows: that "by the [3]determination to do whatever is pleasing and the other (the avoidance of whatever is displeasing) one would avoid transgressing the command of the Lord.

2. Lakshmi Tantra: 17–74
2A. Ahirbudhaya Samhita: 52–14
3. Lakshmi Tantra: 17-76

### (3) *KĀRPAṆYAM*:

*Kārpaṇyam* or helplessness is meditation on one's *ākinchanya* and other attributes (like *ananyagatitvam*) described in the previous chapter, or the freedom from pride to which it gives rise. These generate a feeling of wretchedness or helplessness. In any one of these ways, it would serve to heighten the compassion of the Saviour (*s'araṇya*) and would be useful later on for the promotion of the knowledge that there is no other *upāya*. For it is said:— "*Kārpaṇya*[4] is abstention from seeking any other *upāya*".

### (4) *MAHĀVIS'VĀSA*:

Supreme faith or *mahā vis'vāsa* is necessary for the performance of *prapatti* free from all doubts and it leads later on to freedom from all care or anxiety. For it is said:— "[5]From the faith that He will protect arises the performance of the desired *upāya*."

### (5) *GOPTRITVA VARAṆAM*:

Though *moksha* is the appropriate goal of our essential nature, (*svarūpa*), yet when it is sought as the desired end (*purushārtha*), it has to be asked for, just like other desired objects not so appropriate. Supplication for protection is necessary since the thing (*viz. moksha*) would be given only to one who asks for it. No good thing is ever given without its being asked for. Therefore *moksha* will not be *purushārtha*, unless it is asked for by the *purusha*. That is why it has been stated as follows:— "No [6]protection would be given when it is not sought", and "[6A]Suppliancy or seeking the Lord as Saviour is to make our mind known (to Him)."

Since these five are of use at the time of the performance of *prapatti*, they are essential for the surrender of one's self, *ātma nikshepa*.

4. Lakshmi Tantra: 17–77
5. Lakshmi Tantra: 17–77
6. Lakshmi Tantra· 17–72
6A. Lakshmi Tantra: 17–78

### *ILLUSTRATION OF THE PRESENCE OF THESE ANGAS IN S'ARAṆĀGATI*:

These *angas* that are essential for *prapatti* may be seen in the words of the good Trijata to the Rakshasis advising them to seek refuge under Sitadevi. "Enough [7]of your cruel words." This states the avoidance of what is displeasing. "Use [7A]only conciliatory language". This states implicitly the intention or will to do what is pleasing, since the utterance of speech is impossible without being preceded by mental resolution. "Terrible[7B] dread has, indeed, befallen the *Rakshasās* from Rama." By describing the state of helplessness in which they stand, this shows their *ākinchanya* which is a qualification (for *prapatti*) and it reveals their *kārpanya* also, for, by reflecting on their helplessness, they would give up their arrogance and the like, which leads to *kārpanya*, one of the *angas*. "She[7C] is capable of protecting us, O Rakshasis, from this great danger", which is elaborated by Hanuman into "She is[7D] capable of protecting these Rakshasis from Rama". This shows the great faith or *mahāvis'vāsa* that she will protect, for even when the Lord is intent on punishing one (for his or her mis-deeds) she can turn his mind from anger. "Let us beg Sita[7E] (to protect us). This is what I consider proper. Though you threatened her before, beg of her now; O Rakshasis, do not ask whether she will protect. Such talk is vain." This is supplication for protection. The surrender of the self, *ātma nikshepa*, which is the *angī* and which has these five as its *angas* is intended in the word *pranipāta* (obeisance) which states the cause that produces the graciousness, in the *s'loka*: "Sita, the [7F]daughter of Janaka, is surely bent on showing her graciousness to those who do her obeisance". Therefore the statement in the *s'āstrās* that *Nyāsa* has [8]five *angas*" is seen in its completeness here (in the *prapatti* of the Rakshasis). The Rakshasis did

7. Ramayana Sundarakanda : 27–42
7A. " " 27–42
7B. " " 27–45
7C. " " 27–43
7D. Ramayana Sundarakanda: 58–91
7E. " " 27–44
7F. " " 27–45
8. Lakshmi tantram: 17–74

not reject this advice and even this (mere) acquiescence (namely, non-rejection) made Sita become their refuge owing to her extreme love and graciously say :— "I [9]will be your refuge" That these words were from the very heart and ultimately bore fruit has been declared by the great Parasara Bhattar renowned for his learning and wisdom in the *sloka*: "O Mother Maithili, by the protection which you gave to the offending Rakshasis from Hanuman, you reduced Rama and His council (Sugriva and others) to a lower position, (for Rama protected Vibhishana (who had committed no offence) and Kakasura (who had offended) when they were able to ask for protection whereas you protected the Rakshasis while they were in the very act of offending, and even when they did not themselves beg of you to do so, (at the intercession of Trijata)." In this surrender, by Trijata, of the responsibility (for protection) of herself and of others connected with her, the Rakshasis who were related to Trijata by birth and who had won her affection, were included. So also the four Rakshasas who came along with Vibhishana were included in the *upāya* adopted by him. In that context also where protection was granted (by Rama), it is possible to fit in the *angī* and the *angas*. And it is in this way :— Since (Vibhishana) tells Ravana who is determined to continue in his evil career, "Let [11]Sita be given back to Rama", and "Let us[12] give Sita Devi to Rama and live here, O King, free from all anxiety," Vibhishana's intention to do whatever is pleasing (*ānukūlya sankalpa*) is disclosed. This wholesome speech caused anger in Ravana's mind in the same way as milk tastes bitter to the person suffering from (excess of) bile. The intention to avoid what is displeasing (*prātikūlya varjanam*) is revealed in his coming (to Sri Rama) having given up all attachment to Lanka in accordance with his words, "I seek [13]refuge under Rama having given up (my) sons and wives", and "Lanka[14], friends, and all kinds of wealth have been

9. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 58–90
10. Sri Gunaratnakosa· 50
11. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 9–22
12. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda:15–14
13. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 17–14
14. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 19–5

abandoned by me," (These words were uttered by him) after Ravana cursed him saying: "Shame[15] on thee, O thou that bringest disgrace to our race." He then came to the conclusion that there was no use of giving him advice any more, that he should not enjoy any further the glories of being with him and that he should not even stay in the place where he was. Vibhishana's *kārpaṇya* or feeling of helplessness is stated in his words beginning with "The wicked Ravana" and in his saying that he has no other course left open owing to his enmity with the all-conquering Ravana and in his declaring a short while after: "I am the [16]younger brother of Ravana and have been put to disgrace by him; I have sought Thy protection, O Thou Saviour of all." His supreme faith (*mahāvisvāsa*) which made him approach without fear and say: "I have[16A] sought, as my refuge or *upaya*, Raghava who is the protector of the whole world" is indicated in the words "Vibhishana who was great[16B] in wisdom" as being the cause (of this faith). The world "great" which qualifies "wisdom" is intended also to show his *supreme* faith· his supplication for protection (*Goptritva varaṇam*) is conveyed in the words, "I have sought Raghava", for it is included within them. Besides the indirect suggestion of the supplication for protection, his speech, "Offer me (Vibhishana) to him at once" shows the surrender of his self (*ātmanikshepa*) done with the help of those who could promote this surrender (*ghatake*). The word *Nivedayata*, which here means "offer to Him" would be of no use, if it were interpreted as 'inform'.

These ideas can be found either briefly or at length in all other contexts of *prapatti* and in all deposits of property on trust with others in ordinary life. When depositing, with a capable person, property or wealth which one is oneself unable to keep safe, has it not been seen that one intends to do what is pleasing and to give up the intention to displease that person? One believes that the person (so trusted) can keep it safe and will do so if required, tells him of one's inability to take care of it and begs him to be its

15. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 16-15
16. 19-4
16A. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 17-75
16B. 19-35

custodian. Then one leaves it with him and sleeps care-free, without any fear and with one's arms on one's chest.

### *THE PRESENCE OF THESE ANGAS AND THE ANGĪ IN DVAYA:*

It may be asked how these *angas* are to be understood in the *mantra* called *Dvaya* which reveals the meaning of the action (*prapatti*) to be performed? The answer is as follows :—Doubts might arise whether the Lord of all (1) who is omniscient and omnipotent, (2) who rewards in proportion to the *karma* (performed by one), (3) who does not require any help or assistance, (4) who does not take action immediately like minor deities and (5) who is destitute of equals and superiors— (1) whether the Lord who is of such a nature could (at all) be accessible to those who have committed unlimited transgressions (2) whether He would grant fruits beyond all measure to those who have committed unlimited transgressions which are hindrances to their attainment, (3) whether He would give (these blessings) in return for insignificant actions (on the part of the persons concerned), (4) whether he would grant them without delay and (5) whether He would be absolutely indifferent to the status of the suppliant. To remove these doubts one should know that the Lord has certain features like (1) helpful recommendation (*purushakāra*) from Lakshmi, (2) the relationship of the Master to his servants, (3) attributes and qualities like love (to His creatures), (4) the will or determination (to redeem them) and (5) His own satisfaction in saving them. These features of the *S'eshī* (Bhagavan) which are needed, respectively, for the *upaya* or means and for the attainment lie imbedded, as it were, in the words *S'rīmat* (with Sri or Lakshmi) and Narayana (the refuge of all men) and these features will not, in reason, be available for salvation if there is no determination on the part of the *Jīva* to do what is pleasing (*ānukūlya sankalpa*) and the avoidance of what is displeasing (*prātikūlya varjana*). This should be considered as referred to in those two words in *Dvaya*. These words which show that the master has these features reveal by their appropriateness (the need

for) the determination to perform what would please Him and the avoidance of what would cause displeasure.

These five, namely (helpful recommendation from Sri, the relationship of the Master to His servants, His attributes and qualities, His activity in redeeming and the satisfaction (*prayojana*) He receives have, respectively, the following specific properties: (1) inability to refuse, (2) impossibility of dissociating (Himself from His servants), (3) the unconditioned nature of His grace, (4) the absence of the need for accessory help and (5) His feeling that the gain of those who are below Him is His own gain. If it is asked how the doubts (about salvation by *prapatti*) stated before are removed by these specific properties, the answer is as follows:— (1) Though He is omniscient and omnipotent, He cannot ignore recommendations of certain kinds and will pardon all faults which stand in the way of His accessibility in the same way as a king will pardon the faults of servants of the zenana (on the recommendation of the royal ladies). He will appear as if he is unaware of these faults and be easily accessible. (2) Though He rewards in accordance with one's *karma*, he will become gracious owing to the performance of *prapatti*, which is some thing like an apology for greater things, a *vyāja* or gesture, and grant even that fruit which is beyond all measure and which is one's natural right like an inheritance, on account of its being due to the relationship of master and servant. (3) Although He has all objects of desire and does not require any help or assistance, He looks upon the little action (*prapatti*) performed by one as if it were an act of supreme help to Him because of His supreme and unconditioned compassion; for He is like a generous emperor who is easily won over by even little tokens of homage. Thus he becomes grateful and acts (accordingly). (4) Though He does not (in general) act quickly like inferior deities and rewards those who adopt other means laid down in the *śāstras* only after (some) delay, yet when a man who has no other protector or refuge has performed *prapatti*, He grants whatever is desired at the very time when it is wanted, as He did in the case of Kakasura and Vibhishana, by

His mere will which is accompanied with generosity and which does not require any other help or aid. (5) Though He is destitute of equals and superiors, He has such attributes as independence and does what is desired by His dependants for His own satisfaction; so He grants (their request) without any consideration of their status or rank as (Sri Rama did) in the case of all creatures in Kosala and in the same way as a man feeds his parrot and his child alike with milk Thus the doubts (regarding the efficacy of *prapatti*) arising from analogy with everyday life are removed also by the same analogy. Therefore there is nothing to hinder *prapatti* from being the *upāya* for the desired object, as ordained in the *s'āstras.* Supreme faith or *Mahāvis'vāsa* is not possible for one who has not understood, from the special grace of a good *āchārya,* these five, namely, helpful recommendation and the like, qualified by such attributes as have been mentioned before. This is how it happens: The man finds that he is unfit to adopt such *upāyas* as *karma yoga* and the like on account of his great sins resulting from Iswara's being unfavourably disposed towards him. His condition is such as is described in the following *s'loka*: " Shame[17] on me that have neither purity, nor modesty, neither compassion nor shame; for, O Supreme Person, I desire to aspire to Thy service which even such great *yogis,* as Brahma, Rudra and Sanaka find far beyond the reach of their meditation." Thus he has a hankering for attaining an object that is hard to attain; but for securing it, he adopts an *upāya* which does not involve physical strain, expenditure of money or length of time and which is easy of performance, since it involves only a single mental act or even a single utterance with only a general understanding of the meaning of the words as a whole. With this easy *upāya* he desires to attain that supremely great object (namely, *moksha*) and that, too, when he wants it. He knows that, by birth, conduct and the like, he is unfit to enjoy that fruit, like a [18]dog which is unfit to eat the offering made to the gods, and yet he longs to attain this glory not only for himself but also for those

17. Alavandar Stotram : 47 18. Padma Samhita: Charyapadam: 12-83

who are connected with him. Embar has, therefore, illustrated the difficulty of having such faith by saying that to expect this man who dreads *bhaktiyoga* to have this supreme faith (regarding the efficacy of *prapatti*) is "to ask a man who pleads inability to pay a bundle of sesamum stalks which would yield a *kalam* of seeds to pay instead a *kalam* of oil".

In this connection Appullar stated that the man who, like the *gopis*, has little discrimination but knows that the Lord is easily accessible and who seeks Him as having this quality has greater faith than the man who thinks only of the Lord's supreme greatness and remoteness and avoids Him; for the latter is called in the *Gītā* the worst of men (*narādhama*) as the birth of his knowledge has only led to his ruin. The greatness of this supreme faith born of a knowledge of such things as helpful recommendation (*purushakāra*) from Lakshmi, the essential nature of this faith and the feeling of helplessness are to be seen respectively in the preposition *pra* in *prapadye* (in *Dvaya*), the root *pad* in *prapadye* occurring with the word *s'aranam* and in the first person singular in *prapadye*.

In *S'araṇāgati Gadya*, Sri Ramanuja explains the implication contained in the first person singular (*prapadye*) as meaning "I that have no other refuge". In *Dvaya* the words *S'araṇam prapadye* express supreme faith in the Lord's protection. Therefore the supplication (or prayer for protection) is implicit in the words which express supreme faith in the *upāya* (though not actually stated in so many words). It has been said "I am the abode[19] of transgressions; I am without any other means of protecting myself, I have nothing else to attain than Thee" "Be pleased[19A] to be my *upāya* This thought of prayer is called *s'araṇāgati*. Let it be performed to the Lord." Further "this word *s'araṇam*[19B] is employed to mean any one of the following:- *upāya*, house and protector; here it means only *upāya*." The

19. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-30
19A. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-31
19B. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-29

Lord of all, besides being the protector in the general sense, as stated in all *s'āstras* should, in the case of the *prapanna*, be thought of steadfastly as being an *upāya*, since he has accepted the responsibility of protecting him and stands therefore in the place of other *upāyas*. Besides, the Lord should be thought of as an *upāya* in order that this *adhikārī* (namely, the *prapanna*) who has surrendered the responsibility for his protection to the Lord may remain steadfast without seeking other *upāyas*.

The word *upāya* stands for "the means to secure an end" and this means may be either sentient or non-sentient It has been said :— "Among the *angas* to *prapatti* are the faith that He will protect and the supplication or prayer for protection" "The Lord[20] who controls everything, though He is omniscient and always compassionate, expects a prayer for protection, since He has to look after the process of *samsāra*". Since the *upāya* or means in this case is a sentient being (namely, the Lord), and the prayer for protection (or *goptritva varaṇam*) which is applicable only to sentient beings is necessary here, the word *s'araṇam* in *Dvaya*, which means *upāya*, implies also the prayer for protection. Since the word *s'araṇam* cannot have two meanings when it is used only once, (we should understand that) in the *Dvaya*, the steadfast thought of the Lord being an *upāya* which is peculiar to the *adhikārī* called *prapanna* is brought out by the word *s'aranam* itself and that the prayer for protection which is common to all *adhikāris* is understood by implication from the meaning.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Our kind *Āchāryas* have taught us the way of seeking, as an *upāya*, the Supreme Being who is (ever) ready to help us in our state of helplessness, when we are without such *upāyas* as *bhakti yoga* which give rise to doubts (concerning our ability to adopt them with success). They have taught it to us so well that we

20. Lakshmi Tantra: 17-78.

shall never commit the mistake of begging, for deliverance from the sorrows of *samsāra*, the (other) gods who are bound by *karma* and are therefore like ourselves and who are not related in any way to us.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

In the Scriptures (vouchsafed to us) by Bhagavan himself (i. e in the *Pāncharātra Āgamas*), this *yoga* called *prapatti* is proclaimed as having five or six *angas* and as requiring to be performed only once. In this *yoga*, absention from transgressions results from two of the *angas*, namely, *ānukūlya sankalpa* and *prātikūlya varjana*. It may be understood (also) that from one *anga*, namely, *kārpanya*, one feels that there is no other *upāya*. From supreme faith, another *anga* arises firmness of mind. By another *anga*, namely, *goptritva varanam*, is generated the Lord's will to save. In this *yoga*, namely, *prapatti*, and also in its *angas*, the thought that all these are dependent upon the Lord should arise from a knowledge of the truth (*tattva*) (that the *Jīva* is *s'esha* to the Lord and that all he does is really done by the Lord and that for His own purposes - *sāttvika parityāga*). This last thought is common to *prapatti* and all other *upāyas* for securing *moksha*, (When *s'aranāgati* is performed for the sake of worldly goods, this last thought, *sāttvika parityāga* is absent.)

## (12) THE CHAPTER ON THE PERFORMANCE OF PRAPATTI WITH ITS ANGAS.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

When a desired object is incapable of attainment by oneself and by other *upāyas, prapatti* is the placing of the responsibility or burden of securing it in somebody who is capable of doing so with a request or supplication. It is declared to be the specific thought such as (the following) :— " This object should be accomplished (for me) by you without my making any effort of my own hereafter."

*THE NATURE OF THE ANGĪ :*

In this *upāya* ( consisting of *angī* and *angas* ) to be adopted by the seeker after *moksha,* the *angī* is the surrender of one's self or *ātmā* with a clear understanding that, neither in the *prapatti* nor in the fruit thereof, one has any independence; it should be in the same way as one would surrender a jewel belonging to another to that person himself to be kept safe by him and to be worn by him.

That is :— one should realise that, in relation to the Lord of all who appears in the base and the suffix of the first letter in the *praṇava* (i e.) *a* which means Iswara and the suffix of the dative or fourth case which has been dropped (*i e*) *āya* (for the Lord of all) as the protector of all and the *s'eshī* of all, one has no interest or connection at all in the activity of protecting one-self or those related to one-self and also in what results from the protection of oneself and those related to oneself, either as depending upon one-self or as bringing about some results for oneself. It is the specific form of thought that one is *s'esha* to the Lord and is entirely dependent upon the Lord — in this, the most important feature is surrendering the responsibility of protection (*bharanyāsa*) to the Lord.

## *THE MANNER IN WHICH BHARANYĀSA SHOULD BE PERFORMED:*

The manner in which this form of mental realisation contained in the injunction "One [1]should surrender one's self to me" should be effected is as follows :— The person should realise this within himself: *viz.*, "I am absolutely dependent (upon the Lord); I am His *s'esha* and exist only for Him. My *s'eshatva* does not belong to anybody else and has no dependence on anybody else. Therefore Iswara who is the *s'eshī* and who is independent should protect me for the fulfilment of His own purposes. As is said in the *s'loka*: "Even my self[1A] or *ātmā* does not belong to me; (if a man should consider what does not belong to him as his, he could consider the whole earth as his)"; my soul does not belong to me, it does not belong to anyone else (than Bhagavan), I do not belong to myself, nor can I say that any thing belongs to me unconditionally. As stated in the *s'loka* :— "The [2]embodied being who is like a lump of clay and is entirely dependent (on the Lord) is not able to protect himself; how can he protect others?", I am incapable of protecting myself and those who are said to be mine, independently (of the Lord) or for the sake of myself as the main person interested in it." Just as the wise Uparicharvasu [3]always felt that his soul, his kingdom, his wealth, his wife, and his vehicles were all for Bhagavan, we should also say, "I and what is mine are His. The responsibility of protecting these is also that of the Lord who is the universal Protector" for it is said. "the surrender[4] of the responsibility for one's self and of what is one's is called *ātmanikshepa*." "There[5] is no one other than Bhagavan who is capable of affording protection". The fruit of this protection should also be considered primarily His, for it has been said, "*Ātma*[6] *nikshepa* consists (also) in giving up all relationship to the fruit resulting from His protection and surrendering it (*viz* the fruit) to Kesava "who is the chief beneficiary".

1. Satvata Tantra :
1A. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 25–19
2. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 294–19
3. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 343–24
4. Lakshmi tantram: 17–79
5 Vishnu purana: 1–22–21
6. Lakshmi Tantram: 17–73

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

To all seekers of *moksha* ( whether *bhaktas* or *prapannas*), the surrender of one's *svarūpa* or self and the rest (i e) the fruit in common. To one who has no other *upāya* ( (*i e*) *prapannā* ) and is therefore *akinchana*, the surrender of the responsibility of protection (*bharanyāsa* ) is an additional *angī*. To all *prapannas*, whatever may be the object desired by them, the surrender of the responsibility is common. To those *prapannas* who are desirous of ( only ) *moksha*, the surrender of one's self or *svarūpa* and also of the fruit arising therefrom is an additional (requirement).

*ĪS'WARA IS THE PRINCIPAL BENEFICIARY :*

If it is asked how, when the *Jīva* who performs *prapatti* as the *upāya* for the sake of some gain or fruit is the person interested in the fruit, Iswara becomes the chief beneficiary, the answer is as follows :—Iswara becomes the chief beneficiary, because, just like the modifications of *acit* or matter, the benefits (*purushārthas*) granted by Him to *cit* (*jīva*) are pleasing to Him. Being the *s'eshī* of all, He is the chief beneficiary. To a man of cultivated tastes, who is not in need of anything, the delight in melting dolls made of metals and shaping them into ornaments and wearing them in admiration of their beauty is not different (in kind) from the delight enjoyed by him in keeping a sentient being like a parrot in a cage and feeding it with milk and seeing it fly according to His pleasure.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*

Therefore, *ātmasamarpaṇam* (the surrending of the self to the Lord for protection) means here the realisation of the self as existing solely for the purpose of the Saviour and that to such an extent that the self feels no further responsibility, whatever, for its own protection and this should be accompanied by the knowledge that the fruits of such surrender are not one's own.

The purport of the *s'loka* in Alavandar's *Stotra* (52) which says :— "Whatever I may be in the body, the senses and the like, and whatever may be the qualities of my nature, I who know that I am Thy *s'esha* hereby surrender myself at this very moment at thy two lotus-like feet" — the purport of this *s'loka* is as follows :- If a man has (somehow) come into possession of a cloth bag with the king's seal on it, he would return the bag (to the king), even though he does not know for certain the nature and character of the gem contained within it, in the hope that the king would take it back. So also even those who have not the intelligence to know, with perfect clearness, the nature, character and state of the soul as distinguished from the body may surrender their self or soul with the little knowledge that they possess. If they do so, even for that much, Bhagavan will be prepared to remit the punishment for the theft consisting in making away with one's self (*i. e.* claiming it as one's own) from beginningless time. This idea contained in the *s'āstras* is what (Alavandar) has in mind. In the next **s'loka* (53) it might appear as if he revoked the surrender (made before); but its meaning is only this :— Even when a person is bent on surrendering his self without a knowledge of such things as the nature of his self, if he surrenders it with the notion that it is his own, like the presentation to a king of something belonging to oneself, it would not completely put an end to the crime of having stolen one's self. It does not mean that Alavandar considered his self-surrender made in *s'loka* 52 in accordance with the injunctions contained in the *s'āstras*, as having been made in ignorance.

So from these two *s'lokas*, it is clear that the essence of the *s'āstras* which primarily prescribe *bharasamarpaṇam* as in the words of Alavandar (60) "The responsibility of protecting me is also Thine", consists in saying *na mama* "It is not mine" and getting rid of the feeling of one's connection (with everything), though one may not have a true and discriminatory knowledge about such things as the essential nature of the self.

NOTE :— * "However O lord, what can I surrender to Thee, O Madhava, when I know that I and whatever belongs to me are always thine. As I have nothing of my own, I have nothing to surrender, I am only giving Thee what belongs to Thee".

### *THE MEANING OF THE ANGĪ IN DVAYAM:*

Thus in the first part of the *Dvaya* which deals with the *upāya* or means, the surrender to the Lord of the responsibility (for one's protection) accompanied by the thought that one is *s'esha* to the Lord and exists only for Him is to be understood in connection with the verb (*prapadye*) joined with the word *s'araṇam* which treats of the *upāya* preceded by supreme faith (*mahāvis'vāsa*) and which contains within it, in an implicit form, the supplication for protection.

Thus (from what has been said in this chapter and in the foregoing chapters), although these six (the five *angas* and the *angī*) may be understood separately, while considering, in detail, the meaning of each part of the sentence, yet they constitute only a single mental act while understanding the whole sentence, just like the understanding of other sentences having several parts. Therefore, in accordance with the *s'āstras,* this principal action with its *angas* is performed only once.

### *PRAPATTI IS A MOMENTARY ACTION.*

An archer's action in discharging an arrow for hitting a target may be constituted of several separate acts (like observing the object, taking the aim and discharging the arrow) and yet it is all accomplished in a single moment. Similar is the act of surrendering (to the Lord) the responsibility of (one's) protection. This is evident from the *s'ruti* itself. (The *s'ruti* says, " * *Praṇava* (*aum*) is the bow: the soul or self is the arrow; it must be discharged at Brahman, which is the target, with great care and with keen concentration ".

That this surrender of the responsibility of protection (*bhara-samarpaṇa*) should be chiefly thought of while uttering the

* *Mundaka Upanishad II-4.*

*mantras* of *prapatti* is clearly stated as follows in *Sātyaki tantra* by the Saviour Himself, who undertakes the responsibility: "With this *mantra* one should surrender one's self to me. The one who has surrendered to me the responsibility of doing what should be done will become one who has done one's duty."

## *A BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHAT BHARASAMARPAṆA IS:*

In (the performance of) this (*angī*), the conclusion regarding the adoption of this *upāya* with its *angas* is as follows :- it consists in the act of surrendering the responsibility for the protection of one's self preceded by the following:— the giving up of the thought that one is the doer (for it is the Lord that does everything), the giving up of the thought of 'mine' (that there is anything belonging to oneself), the giving up of the fruit of the action, the giving up of the thought that he himself adopts the means for obtaining that fruit; these must be accompanied by *ānukūlya sankalpa*, *prātikūlyavarjana* and the rest and, likewise, reverent bowing down to the succession of *gurus* and with the utterance of *Dvaya*. The surrender of the responsibility for the protection of one's self carries with it implicity the surrender of one's *Svarūpa* or self and the fruit or gain arising from it.

The giving up of the thought that one is the doer will result from the realisation of one's entire dependance on the Lord throughout the existence of the soul. This will make one know that this doership has been vouchsafed to one by the Lord Himself.

The giving up of the thought of 'MINE' (*mama*) and of the fruit (of *prapatti*) will arise from the knowledge that one, as well as what belongs to one, exists, by one's very nature, solely for the fulfilment of the purposes of Bhagavan alone.

The giving up of the *upāya* for attaining the fruit (*moksha*) will result from a knowledge that the *prapatti* performed by a man for winning the grace of the Saviour cannot directly and immediately be the cause of the main fruit, namely, *moksha*, that

*prapatti* is non-sentient and, therefore, incapable of possessing the will to grant the fruit and that only Iswara is the *upāya* for this fruit (*moksha*). Since Bhagavan who, out of the love natural to Him, has been the primeval cause of everything from the time of giving the man the body and the senses to the time of his uttering the *Dvaya*—since Bhagavan is possessed of the will accompanied by the desire to show His grace and is the immediate and direct cause (of the final fruit, *viz moksha*) and since he also stands Himself in the place of the prescribed *upāya* in the case of the man who is incapable of (adopting) other *upāyas*, He alone is the *upāya* for the fruit. The authority for this conclusion is the nature of the object, (namely, Bhagavan) as understood from the *s'āstra* which reveals the Person who has that nature and this authority cannot be challenged by reason.

### *NADĀTHUR AMMĀL'S SUMMARY OF THE MEANING OF PRAPATTI :*

The following is a summary of the performance of *prapatti* with its *angas* as given by Sri Nadathur Ammal:—

"I have been wandering in *samsāra* by doing, from beginningless time, what is displeasing to Thee. From this day onwards, I will do what is pleasing (to Thee). I will not do what will displease (Thee). I have no capital with which to attain Thee. I have made up my mind to seek only Thee as the *upāya*. Be Thou my *upāya* ! Hereafter, either in the removal of what is evil or in the attainment of what is good, I have no further responsibility from now onwards". In this the determination to do what is pleasing and abstinence from what is displeasing have to be stated only once as accessories or *angas* to the *upāya*. His acting later in accordance with this determination to do what is pleasing etc. will be the result or fruit of the *upāya* and will last as long as his self lasts. If, in accordance with the words of Sri Ammal, we take the avoidance of what is displeasing as meaning only the determination to avoid what is displeasing, it is evident that it has to be made only once (*i.e* at the time of *prapatti*). It is true that it has

been said :— "I have [7] dissociated myself from sins which cast one into *samsāra*" (But it may be explained in this way :—) The avoidance of what is displeasing may mean either having no connection (at all) with it (*i. e.*) giving it up *or* the determination to avoid it. In either case, this is, at the first instant, an *anga* and the actual avoidance is the result or fruit of *prapatti* which follows afterwards. This holds good also in regard to *vis'vāsa* or faith.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

Doing what is pleasing (to the Lord) and avoiding what is displeasing (in one's life after *prapatti*) are the result of meritorious deeds done in the past, and also the determination made at the time of performing *prapatti*.

Therefore wise are they who perform *prapatti* in order to render faultless service during their life-time and to attain *moksha* after casting off the body resulting from *prārabdha karma*.

*TAMIL VERSE*:

Our princely *Āchāryas*, who wear the crown of proficiency in the *Vedas*, have placed us for protection under the feet of the Lord, who, from beginningless time, has resolved, in His great compassion, to save us; they have done so in order that there may be no further responsibility in ourselves (for our protection), by saying to us, "Do not forget the truth that the Lord, who is the soul of the world, will protect you who are related to Him as *s'esha* (existing solely for His purposes)."

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The horse, the chariot and the charioteer — the end of the Vedas (the Upanishads) shows that the three *tattvas*, *cit*, *acit*, and

7. Lakshmi Tantra: 50-215.

*Īs'wara* are related to one another respectively like the three mentioned above and have always had varied activities in accordance with their respective nature. In connection with these activities, all the three are of the nature of being the (material) causes; two, *cit* and *Īs'wara*, are of the nature of doers, and one (i. e) *Īs'wara* is alone independent (of all others). Therefore the *jīva*, the responsibility for whose protection has been undertaken by Iswara who is the Master, is carefree and has no further responsibility of his own in the matter of his protection.

## (13) THE CHAPTER ON THE MAN WHO HAS DONE WHAT OUGHT TO BE DONE (*I. E.*) PRAPATTI.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA.*

When Bhagavan, who is omnipotent, who knows all things and who is, by His nature, full of love for us, has accepted the responsibility (of protecting us), there is nothing more remaining to be done by us here for it; let us therefore fix our souls in that boundless sea of supreme bliss and feel the satisfaction (of having attained our object) by becoming rich in rendering service to Him, poor though we may have been before.

### *THE PRAPANNA HAS DONE WHAT HE OUGHT TO DO AND HAS ATTAINED HIS GOAL:*

(1) The man who has adopted this *upāya* (*prapatti*) has, from the time when he adopted it, nothing else to do for attaining the fruit thereof. (2) What he had to do has been done by performing *prapatti* once; (3) (Bhagavan) who is independent (of all others), whose will is irresistible and who is the one that rewards us with the fruit (of our actions) says, "Do not grieve†," Owing to these (three) reasons, the *prapanna* would become care-free at the thought of having surrendered his *bhara*. Since the Lord of all who has been accepted as the *upāya**, which is ever present as stated in, " Seek refuge under me alone ", has said "I will release Thee from all sins", and since the Lord can (always) be trusted and since He is capable (of acting according to His word), he would have no doubts or fears in regard to the realisation of his object. So he (the *prapanna*) would rejoice at having given up even the slightest trace of other aims or objects and also with having given up other *upāyas* along with *upāyas* which are subsidiary to them. Like a poor man who has received a great treasure with little effort, he would rejoice at the prospect of the

† *Charama sloka.*

**Siddhopaya* - the *upaya* which is ever present is Bhagavan, for He is always eager to save the *jiva*.

supreme goal (of life) which he is to attain. It has been said:— "He[1] who has sought, in every possible manner, the refuge of Narayana who is the Saviour and the *guru* of the world is not the servant of the gods, of the *rishis*, of animals, of men and of the *pitris*. He is in no way their debtor". In regard to such *jīvas* (*kshetrajnas*) as have taken the names of Prajapati (the Lord of creatures) and *Pas'upati* (the Lord of beasts, *viz*. bound souls), he is able, like one whose promissory note registered in the unwritten Vedas under certain conditions (*upādhi* relating to caste *etc.*) and requiring service as interest for the principal (borrowed by him from them) has been fully discharged (torn off). Therefore when he has to pronounce their names in the performance of *such compulsory and regularly recurrent and occasional rites as the five great *yajnas* (*Panchamahā yajnas*), he would realise that these names refer really to Iswara (Bhagavan) etymologically: as has been stated by the sages in passages like:— "Those[2] who worship the *pitris* (the spirits of their fore-fathers), the gods, the Brahmins and Agni - they (in reality) worship only Vishnu, who is the Inner Self of all beings." When the king's servants place a garland and a jewel on the coat worn by the king, their object is not to please the coat but to gain the favour of the king.

The same idea has been expressed in such places as the chapter called *Yajnāgrahara* in the *Mahābhārata** (Ch. 349 *S'anti Parva*) and in *Hastigiri Māhātmya*. In the *Brahma Sūtras* also (1-2-29), it is said: "Since words like Agni refer directly also to Brahman, Jaimini is of opinion that there is nothing unreasonable in it". Such words as gods and *pitris* have no connection with the coats called gods and *pitris* and by the full significance contained in their

NOTE:— The idea is that Prajapati, Pasupati. Agni and others are only like the coat of a king and that, within them, there is the Inner Ruler, Immortal, who alone is Parameswara or the Supreme Ruler.

1. Bhagavatam: 11-5-41 2. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 355-24

* Mahabharata: Santiparva: Chapter 349: "The Great Padmanabha receives the quintessences of all the offerings made in sacrifices" and when the gods asked Brahma who was performing a sacrifice to Bhagavan he replied: "Neither by me nor by any one else who wants to cross the sea of *samsara* are you adored with sacrifices. It is only Bhagavan who receives our offerings".

parts (*i.e.*) etymology or derivation, they stand for Iswara (Bhagavan), in the same way as words like Narayana do. In pronouncing such words (Prajapati, Pasupati, Agni), the *prapanna* would realise that there is no violation of his sole and exclusive devotion to Bhagavan, in the same way as, when the pure sacrificers (*s'uddhayājī*) who live in Swetadvipa pronounce the word Narayana (*Nārāṇam ayanam*), they do not go against their exclusive devotion to Bhagavan by using the word *Nāra*. Bhagavan has willed to accept him as His servant to render service in accordance with his *varna*, *ās'rama*, occasions (like the birth of a child) and qualities (like being a Vaishnava). Therefore by service to Him who is the Ruler and the *S'eshī* - service which consists in obedient performance of His commands and permissions as understood from the *S'āstras*, the *prapanna* would do his little bit of service like the freed souls who understand the mind of the Lord by direct perception and be like the *muktas*; he would be extolled, according to the *S'āstras* and those who stand by them, as one who, by the completion of the *upāya* (*prapatti*), has done his duty and who, by the completion of his aim in life, has attained satisfaction.

Sri Ramanuja has conclusively described the *prapanna's* reflection on his satisfactory fulfilment of his duty thus in his *S'araṇāgati gadya* :— "Therefore rest happy in the assurance free from all doubt that you will know me, see me, and attain me as I truly am". This is what it means :— "We were wandering in *samsāra* owing to Bhagavan's punishment inflicted on us for transgressing His commands from beginningless time. By the compassion of Bhagavan ever waiting for an opportunity (to save us), we came into the reach of the kind glances of our good *āchāryas* and by repeating after them their utterance of *Dvaya*, we have completed our *prapatti*. There is no further means needed for obtaining the Saviour. Therefore He will pardon (all the sins) which were the cause of the punishment. The Lord of Sri (Lakshmi) who is the *s'eshī* of all and who is capable of purifying His devotees and obtaining their service, will, for His own glory, protect us. With this faith, the *prapanna* would be free

from all care or anxiety or responsibility." (This is the purport of Sri Ramanuja's words in the *Gadya*). This idea is the conclusive meaning which is surely contained also in the Saviour's words " Do not grieve " (in the *charama s'loka* ).

## *THE MARKS OF ONE WHO HAS PERFORMED PRAPATTI :*

Since one of the qualifications for the performance of *prapatti*, is sorrow or grief before *prapatti*, if he had no grief before, he would not have the necessary qualification for performing *prapatti*. So by the principle "when there is no cause, there is no effect," his *upāya* (*prapatti*) will not be effective. If, after the performance of *prapatti*, he grieves owing to want of faith in the words of the Saviour, it would follow by the principle "When the effect is absent, there must have been absence of all the required materials (or causes)" that his *upāya* is incomplete (owing to want of full faith) and that the benefit or fruit will be delayed inasmuch as it will require the completion of the *upāya*. The man who was formerly full of grief and who is now free from sorrow in accordance with the words" Do not grieve" may be considered to have done what should be done (*i. e*) *prapatti* in the proper manner.

*TAMIL VERSE*:

Our spiritual leaders whom the Lord of Sri that dwells on Hastigiri has taken into His protection after endeavouring for a long time to find out what boon He should confer on those who loved Him - they are like kings and gods (to us), for they have, ever in their minds, the abode of the Lord of the eternal *sūris* and they are like Paramahamsas, because they have completed all rites that have to be performed, (or like swans in their purity or in their capacity to separate the essential from the non-essential).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

*Bharanyāsa* (or the surrender of the responsibility of protection) has been made (at the feet of) Bhagavan (Hari) for reaching beyond *samsāra*. So also actions that can produce only limited pleasures have been given up just like forbidden actions. The sustenance of the body will continue in accordance with past *karma* (which has begun to operate). So nothing need be done for it. Thereafter (*i.e*) after *prapatti* the bounds* imposed by the Lord's command are scrupulously observed by wise men, (merely because it is the Lord's command.)

---

NOTE:— * This means that the *nitya* and *naimittika karmas* which are ordained by the Lord in the Sastras have still to be performed after *prapatti*, as, otherwise, there would be transgression of His command.

## (14) THE CHAPTER ON THE MARKS OR SIGNS BY WHICH ONE CAN RECOGNISE THAT ONE IS IN THE PROPER STATE OR NISHTA.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA.*

To a man whose understanding is firmly and properly fixed on (a knowledge of) his essential nature, on the *upāya* adopted by him, *viz.* *prapatti* and on the ultimate aim of life (*purushārtha*), a recognition that he is steadily fixed in this state gives more delight (even) than his approaching *moksha*. For by the might of this knowledge, he is able, with a disciplined mind, to close up the chasms lying before him (as obstacles) which are deep and hard to fill and which are as immense as the sky.

I. *Signs or marks regarding nishtā in Svarūpa:—*

How can a man know that he has firm faith or *nishtā* (in regard to the knowledge of *svarūpa*?) The answer is as follows:— (1) when he is treated with such things as contumely by others, he would be free from sorrow or depression owing to the knowledge that these faults pertaining to the body and the like (ugliness, low birth *etc*) have no connection (at all) with his essential nature. (2) It has been said:— "When one man[1] reviles another, the sin of the reviled person passes on to the reviler". So towards these fools that are to receive his sin by their derisive talk, he (the *prapanna*) should feel over-whelming campassion as stated in such *s'lokas* as the following :— "If other [2]created beings harbour enmity and show hatred, the wise man pities them saying, "How wrapped up they are in great delusion!" and "One [3]should very much pity the fool who does evil to himself by violating the *s'āstras* and straying from the right path and who is, therefore, like firewood destined for the flames of hell." (3) The *prapanna*

---

1. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva: 110-64.
2. Vishnu purana: 1-17-82.
3. Ayurveda?

would feel grateful to these revilers as being benefactors who remind him, by their censure, of faults which have been described in Alavandar's **s'loka* and in such verses as those of †Tirumangai Alvar as fit to be reflected on in connection with oneself. (4) The *prapanna* (who has the *nishtā* in *svarūpa*) would understand that all souls are dependent on Bhagavan owing to their essential nature, that all *jīvas* (*kshetrajnas*) are under the sway of past *karma* and that these revilers of his (therefore) revile him by the prompting of Iswara, who is independent and is the *s'eshī* of *all* and who enjoys the *līlā* which follows from past *karma* in the relations between him and his revilers. He would therefore feel no aversion to them: (5) He would rejoice that his past sins which have begun to operate in this life are now being worked out in part. If he has these marks or characteristics as clarified in the explanation of the meaning of the first word (*praṇava*) and the middle word *na mama* (*namo*) in the *Moolamantra*, the *prapanna* may consider that he has realised his difference from *acit* or matter, that he possesses knowledge which will enable him to act beneficially towards all beings, that he feels his being destitute of *upāyas* of any kind, that he knows his existing solely for the fulfilment of the purposes of Bhagavan and is entirely dependent on him and should therefore do what is pleasing to the Lord, who, by His very nature, is impartial, who rewards (or punishes), each according to his *karma*, and who is the independent *s'eshī* for whom all else exist and that he understands that his good can arise only from the will of another (*ie*) the Lord, as has been pointed out in the *s'loka*: "Where am I[4] who am so full of evil thoughts? Where is the possibility of my seeking what is good to me?

NOTE:— * *Alawandar's sloka* · 62 - "How can I ever cross the sea of sorrow and render service at Thy feet - I who have transgressed all the regulations of the *sastras* who am mean, fickle-minded, envious, ungrateful, arrogant, lustful, deceitful, wicked and sinful?"

† *The verses of Tirumangai Alwar:* Peria Tirumozhi I - I "Born into this life, I fell into deep anguish of mind. I mingled with young women thinking it was greatly to be desired, until at last I realised that salvation consists only in the utterance of the name 'NARAYANA'.

4. Jitanta Stotram: 1-18

Therefore, O Thou, that controllest the gods! Direct me to do whatever is good for me, O Madhava!"

## II *THE NISHTĀ CONCERNING UPAYĀ:*

If, in him, these features that follow are found, the man who has performed *prapatti* may infer that he is in the proper state in relation to the knowledge concerning the *upāya* (1) He understands that, for him, there is no protection from himself or from others and that Iswara is his only Protector: (2) Though he is confronted with causes of fear even to the extent of death, he does not bewail his state and feels satisfied as at the approach of what is desirable, for it has been said:— "People are [5]generally afraid of Death because they have not done what they should have done; those who have done what they should do expect Death as if he were a welcome guest" (3) He has the perfect confidence of having found a Saviour. Sita Devi taught this by her example. "The beautiful [6]Sita, resting on the arm of Sri Rama, was not afraid at the sight of the elephant, the lion or the tiger (when she was with him in the forest)" She said to Ravana:—O Thou [7](Rakshasa) with ten heads that deservest to be reduced to ashes! because I have not obtained Sri Rama's permission and because I have to cherish my *tapas* as a *pativratā* (a wife devoted to her husband), I do not burn thee to ashes by the flame (of my chastity) and likewise, "if Rama [8]who can destroy the forces of his enemies fills Lanka with his arrows and take me away from here, it will be in keeping with his character." In respect of the object for which he has made *bharanyāsa*, the *prapanna* is without any (further) effort of his own (to save himself). In that matter, he realises that the removal of what is evil and the attainment of what is good are in the Lord's hands alone If he has these features, it may be inferred that he is steadfastly fixed in the *upāya* which he has sought and which is the means of obtaining all the benefits desired

5. Itihasa Samucchaya: 7–38.
6. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 60–20.
7. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 22–20.
8. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 30–39.

by him, which is prescribed as an *upāya* in the first half of the *Charama s'loka*, which is to be thought of in the first part of *Dvaya* and which is implicit also in the middle word of *Tirumantra* (*namo*).

## III *THE NISHTĀ CONCERNING PURUSHĀRTHA:*

It has been said:— "Of the [9]three, your birth, continuance and perishing, why should you be anxious only about your continuance? In the same way as birth and death come of themselves (without any choice being left to you), your continuance in life also will not depend on anything done by you" and again: "The [10]goddess of Lakshmi comes, of her own accord, to one who does not exert himself in any way. Another man who makes efforts does not obtain even the food (he wants). This is in accordance with past *karma*". The *prapanna* whose understanding is firmly fixed in the *purushārtha* would not feel anxious in relation to such things as the maintenance of the body which are directed by Iswara in accordance with particular acts of past *karma* that have begun to operate in this life. He would reflect that, even if he grieved or felt anxious about these things, nothing would happen except according to the will of God, as stated in the following passages:— "Though he [11]flies in the air, or enters the lower world, called Rasatala, or wanders about the whole earth, a man will not obtain what is not ordained for him" and again, "Whatever [12]work is done in the world is work done by me. So others propose but I dispose." When things not forbidden in the *s'āstras* come to him without any seeking of his and by the will of God, the *prapanna* realises that the debt which has resulted from past *karma* that has begun to operate is now being discharged. Therefore he enjoys them without trying to avoid them. For it has been said in *Parās'aragītā* and elsewhere :— "House-holders should receive whatever comes to them without any exertion on their part. As regards their *dharmas*, on the other hand, it is my opinion that they should, in all possible ways, exert themselves

9. ?
10. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 339-15
11. ?
12. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 359-56

and fulfil them", and so also, "The [13]wise man should not be anxious about his food. He should think only of his *dharma*. Man's food comes to him along with his birth." Like-wise it has been stated in *Ajagaropākhyāna* :— "I do [14]not avoid enjoyments which come to me of themselves and which are also in keeping with (my) *dharma* nor do I seek any enjoyment which can be had only with painful effort."

The *prapanna* who has attained *nishtā* in *purushārtha* has neither pleasure nor pain, when he meets with or fails to get objects usually desired other than *moksha*, as taught in the following *s'lokas* :- "When [15]one of these two, pleasure and pain, arrives, one should not feel delighted on seeing pleasure nor feel sorrow when one sees pain", and "The man who[16] meditates on the feet of the Lord is not elated at the possession of wealth, nor does he feel dispirited when what he possesses is lost." He has, on the other hand, a great longing for service to the Lord which is suited to his essential nature and which is the supreme aim of his life. This urgent longing for the object to be gained will make him cry out as in Alavandar's *Stotram* and in Sri Ramanuja's *gadya*, "When, when shall I see, face to face, Bhagavan Narayana? When shall I press his two lotus-like feet on my head?" When such conduct and feeling are seen in the *prapanna*, it may be inferred that his mind is firmly fixed in regard to the supreme and infinite goal of existence which is indicated, as (an infinitesimal part of) the sea is by the finger, in the dative *Nārāyaṇāya* in *Tirumantra*, in the dative *Nārāyaṇāya* and in the word *namas* in *Dvaya* and in the sentence "I shall release thee from all sins" in *Charama s'loka*.

Thus by observing these signs in himself, the man may realise that he is well established in the state of a true *prapanna* in regard to his essential nature (*svarūpa*), his *upāya* and his supreme aim (*purushārtha*) as stated in the *s'loke* :— I am a self, not a body; I am the *s'esha* who exists only for Lord; I have

13. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 301-35
14. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 177-24
15. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 175-5
16. The second Tiruvandadi: 45

no possessions of my own; I have sought His protection with the desire to render service to Him" and as understood also from *Tirumantra* and the like. To the *prapanna* who has seen in himself these signs, there will be no causes of fear confronting him other than offence to those who know Brahman, which might occur (as a possibility) on account of his living in the midst of enemies (the body and the senses), nor sources of delight other than the service which suits his essential nature. (This may be seen in the case of Sita devi) of whom it is said, "Sita[18] does not look at these Rakshasis; she does not look at these trees full of flowers and fruits. Her heart is fixed on one alone and she sees only Sri Rama". If by chance, these (other causes of fear and sources of delight) come before him, he will have neither fear nor delight.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Those who have become well-established in their knowledge of the three things shown in the *Tirumantra* (namely, *svarūpa*, *upāya*, and *purushārtha*) will never agree to do what is improper and will do only what is proper. They are really wise men who find, in themselves, these attitudes and actions and they may be called eternal *sūris* living on the earth.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

In the interval between this life of worldly enjoyment and life after *moksha* — (an interval) which may be compared to a mingling of the state of sleep and the waking state — some destiny has placed *prapannas* for a time and they pass the rest of their lives wearing, on their heads, the garland of their *nishtā* in regard to *tatva*, *upāya*, and *purushārtha*, which has been vouchsafed to them by the Lord.

17.

18. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 16–25

## (15) THE CHAPTER ON THE MANNER IN WHICH ONE SHOULD CONDUCT ONESELF AFTER *PRAPATTI.*

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

The *prapanna*, with his eyes fixed on the absence of his own responsibility (*bhara*) in regard to both what is seen in this life and what is to come hereafter, follows, until the fall of his body, a course of action which is faultless and agreeable ( observing the code of conduct prescribed for his *varṇa* and his *ās'rama* ) and for the sake of delight (in the enjoyment of the auspicious qualities of Bhagavan ) frequently studies Vedanta with good men, teaches the sweet and noble utterances ( of such as Alvars ) always and also listens to them.

*THE CODE OF CONDUCT SUITED FOR A PRAPANNA:*

The man who has thus done what he should do and infers his proper attainment of *nishtā* (in *svarūpa, upāya* and *purushārtha*) should follow the line of conduct described hereunder as long as he lives, like a farmer who, out of a big field fit for use in the adoration of the Lord, gives up a large part and reserves only a small fraction of it as enough for his needs. This *adhikārī*, namely, the *prapanna*, who has given up his connection with many things and is still connected with certain things (like the body) should follow a line of conduct which would be most delightful like the successive services rendered by released souls (in heaven). This line of conduct is an end in itself ; it has been prescribed for him in the *s'āstras* as required to be done (in certain specific divisions of time); it is a form of service connected by links to the service which is to follow immediately after and is the means of winning the favour of the Master and is also its effect. The following passages indicate this line of conduct; — "I read[1] the books which describe the attributes and qualities of Bhagavan ; I listened

1. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi: 63

to other people reading them, I bowed to Him, I worshipped Him always and performed service to Him and thus saw to it that my time was not spent in vain". "Men should[2] get rid of their sorrow which is as deep as the sea on account of past *karma* surrounding the soul, by meditating on those passages which reveal the Lord's qualities. If they should not do so, by what other thought can they get rid of their sorrow while in *samsāra ?*" "We [3]should, without intermission render service to the Lord in all places and in all circumstances and at all times". "If the [4]Lord is so gracious as to enable me to spend my time always with the passages which describe His qualities in my mouth, with His form alluring the eye and other senses in my mind, and with flowers fit enough for His form in my hands - if I find this grace, what is there unpleasant for me while living here? "I was[5] born to seek flowers that are hard to obtain in order that they may be placed at the Lord's feet" "May I, [6]the sinner that I am, press the tender feet of the Lord which are gently pressed by the incomparably beautiful Lakshmi and the other, *viz*, the goddess of the Earth!" "This is [7]the only object that I desire — that the Lord should take me into His service for His own satisfaction". "We will [8]render service, O Lord, only to Thee". "If the Lord [9]will be so gracious as to let us gently press His feet in the place where He sleeps" "My [10]fingers will keep count when I utter the names of the Lord." "The [11]days of my starvation are not those on which I do not eat — (they are) the days, if ever they occur, on which I do not constantly meditate saying "*nāmo Nārāyaṇa*" and the days on which I do not approach Thy feet with the three Vedas which are (as it were) freshly blossomed flowers". "My tongue[12] will not praise any one but Thee; I wonder whether Thou wilt

2. Peria Tiruvandadi: 86
3. Tiruvoimozhi: 3-3-1
4. Tiruvoimozhi: 8-10-4
5. Tiruvoimozhi: 1-4-9
6. Tiruvoimozhi: 9-2-10
7. Tiruvoimozhi: 2-9-4
8. Tiruppavai: 29
9. Nachiar Tirumozhi: 4-1
10. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4-4-3
11. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 5-1-6
12. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 5-1-1

suffer any loss of glory by my praise; but I cannot stop praising Thee, for my tongue is not under my control". "My mouth[13] does not praise any one but Him", "My [14]shoulders do not bow to any one but Him", "I [15]will not look upon my soul which belongs to the Lord as my own, nor will I remain in the company of those mean persons who think so," "May [16]Thou be so gracious as to make me ever meditate on Thee", "When will [17]these two eyes of mine delight in looking at the forehead of the Lord where the two gems that shed light shine dispelling darkness?" "I do [18]not long for birth accompanied with wealth that (only) makes the flesh grow but pray to be born as a bird in the Venkata Hills". "The [19]eyes of those who have not seen that Golden Hill which rides on the bird and which, long ago, planted the hill wound with the serpent in the sea and churned it for the sake of nectar — their eyes are not eyes at all"

Likewise also these Sanskrit *slokas* :—

"I do [20]not long for the wealth of Brahma or for that of Rudra. I long to be either a *kadamba* tree or a *kunda* tree on the backs of the Yamuna (which Sri Krishna purified with His holy feet)." "Take me as [21]Thy servant. There is nothing improper in this. I will attain thereby the satisfaction of serving Thee for whom alone I exist. Thou wilt also obtain the satisfaction of having protected one who has sought Thee as his refuge." "Whether you[22] are awake or asleep, I will render all the service that is required." "Live[23] as you may for a hundred years, I will be under you. Order me yourself to do whatever you want in places which you consider beautiful". "I long[24] only for being the

13. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 11
14. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 63
15. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 64
16. Tiruchanda viruttam: 101
17. Perumal Tirumozhi: 1-1
18. Perumal Tirumozhi: 4-1
19. Tirumangai Alvar: 11-7-1
20. ?
21. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 31-22
22. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 31-27
23. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 15-7
24. Jitanta stotram: 1-13

servant of Bhagavan in all my births" "I will [25]spend my days thus, rendering the appointed service in each of the five parts of the day and in worshipping Bhagavan with good *chandana*. flowers and the like - such as I can obtain with my own effort."

These are the ways of service after *prapatti* which are in keeping with one's essential nature (*svarūpa*) in spending the time.

## *THE PRAPANNA SHOULD SEEK SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE:*

Further the *prapanna* should not remain complacently ignorant of what should be known to one in that state, in the presumption that he has already done what should be done. In the state of perfect enjoyment of the Lord, knowledge and love are (both) essential. Therefore in accordance with the *s'loka*, "One [26]should never beg of the Lord anything but knowledge and love for His holy feet. The man who begs (for other things) will surely perish", there is nothing improper in desiring knowledge and love of the Lord. It has been said:— "The [27]Lord of the yellow raiment has incarnated as the *guru* to teach the *Veda*." So the *prapanna* should learn from such *gurus* possessed of exclusive devotion to the Lord and having a clear knowledge of (the truth). He should obtain clear knowledge from them by following the injunction contained in the *s'loka*:— "Bow to [28]your *guru*, place your doubts before him and render service to him, (then) learn from him the true nature of the self. (Your) *āchāryas* will teach you the truth concerning the self." He should have his knowledge rendered clear and pure, for (the poet) says, "Even a man [29]that is dull becomes intelligent by seeking the company of the wise. Muddy water becomes clear and pure by being mixed with the lather from soapnut." It has been said, "He whose [30] knowledge of the truth (concerning Bhagavan) extends up to the enjoyment

25. The verses of Vankipuram Nambi
26.
27. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 5-2-8
28. Bhagavad Gita: 4-34
29. Kalidasa: Malavikagnimitra.
30. Satvata Samhita.

of the Lord — all those who fall within the range of his eyes will be purified of all their sins." So the *prapanna* should live in close contact with such as are well established in this knowledge. As stated (in the *Gītā*) :— "In a [31]tank which is intended for all and for various purposes, one should take only as much (of the water) as is required for one's purposes", the *prapanna* should determine what he should choose, from among their ways of life and conduct, what is in accordance with his *varṇa*, his *ās'rama*, his *gotra*, his character and the like and conduct himself in keeping with that determination and should walk warily lest he should fall into the pitfall of thinking of his own superiority and the inferiority of others, which might arise from his conceit while observing this code of conduct.

Even if, as it occurred to such as Nammalvar and Nathamunigal, he is blessed with the special grace of the Saviour so as to enjoy the rise of such benefits as the vision (of the Lord), he should feel sure (that it is not due to any merit of his own) as said in, "I do not[32] know what is good and what is bad", and "Even if I know what is good and what is evil, I cannot obtain what is good and avoid what is evil" He should see to it that his being destitute of all *upāyas* (*Ākinchanya*) which is due to his *svarūpa*, his maintenance (*sthithi*) and his activities (*pravritti*) being entirely dependent (on the Lord) does not suffer any change or loss. He should remember his utter helplessness (*kārpaṇya*) as described in the *s'loka* "I [34]am the abode of all transgressions, I have no means of protecting myself and I have nothing else to attain than Thee", and in such verses as "I have [35]not been observing the code of the disciplined life, nor have I keen intelligence", "What [36]can I do? "May my [37]misery be put an end to by Thee! If thou dost not do so, there is no one else to protect

31. Bhagavad Gita: 2-46
32. Perialvar Thirumozhi: 5-1-3
33. Peria Tiruvandadi: 3
34. Ahirbudhaya Samhita: 3-30
35. Tiruvaimozhi: 5-7-1
36. Tiruvoimozhi: 5-8-3
37. Tiruvoimozhi: 5-8-8

me", "I have no [38]other *upāya* and no other protector," "I do not[39] know of any one whom I can hold as the Saviour of my soul" "We are such[40] ignorant women belonging to the race of cowherds as eat in forests while grazing the cows there", "I have [41]given up the rites pertaining to Brahmins of worshipping the three fires after ablutions", "I was [42]not born into any of the four castes wherein one is fit to follow *dharma*", "I am [43]ignorant and of low birth", "I [44]have no one to seek for support", "Even if [45]Thou dost not remove from me the sufferings due to *karma*, I have no other refuge than thee," "I have not [46]practised *karma yoga*; I have not understood the real nature of the disembodied self (*i. e*) I have not performed *Jnānayoga*, nor have I *bhakti* towards Thy holy feet." (In these Tamil verses and Sanskrit *s'lokas*, the feeling of helplessness is well depicted and the *prapanna* should realise his own helplessness by remembering such verses).

Owing to the knowledge of his own unfitness from time immemorial and the loss of the Lord's service which resulted from it, which may cause excessive disgust, the *prapanna* should not fall into despair which makes one lament in the words of the Alvar saying, "The nature[47] of the man in *samsāra* is such that he identifies himself with the perishing body and calls it "I"; from it arises also evil conduct and from it arises again the body that is foul". (Without falling into despair), he should hearten himself with the succeeding words there :— "O [47]Lord of the immortals, Thou wast born into all castes and even from the wombs of animals in Thy eagerness to protect the *Jīvas*!" He should comfort himself

38. Tiruvoimozhi: 6–10–10
39. Tiruvoimozhi: 10–10–3
40. Tiruppavai: 28
41. Tirumalai: 25
42. Tiruchandaviruttam: 90
43. Peria Tirumozhi: 5–8–1
44. Peria Tirumozhi: 1–9–9
45. Perumal Tirumozhi: 5–1
46. Alavandar Stotram: 22
47. Tiruviruttam: 1

with the words of the Saviour who appears in front to save him — the words which are wholesome and sweet like mother's milk (such as " For the protection of the good and the destruction of the wicked and so also for the establishment of *dharma*, I am born again and again in every *yuga*." He should bathe, as it were, in the words (of Bhagavan) which reveal the secret of the *avatārs* and take courage (from passages like the following) :— "Whatever[48] a man may have been in the past, if he lives a righteous life in his old age, it will do him good; his evil deeds in the past will do him no harm " and "A man may[49] have been wicked in his past life; he may have fed on anything (however impure); he may have been ungrateful; he may have been a sceptic; in spite of all that, if he earnestly seeks the protection of the Lord, who is the cause of the world, know that that man is faultless owing to the Lord's greatness ", " In one[50] half of an instant, a *jīva* commits a sin which cannot be expiated even in the course of ten thousand *kalpas* of Brahma. But Thou pardonest him if only he gives up the thought of sinning (again), even though he has transgressed. How wonderful this is!" " The past[51] is past, what can we do concerning it? The wise man should think of erecting the dam, even when the water is flowing." " It is [52]good to die after performing *prapatti* to the Lord at least in the dying moments ".

In accordance with this principle, the *prapanna* should not lament for what is past and without running away at the thought of his past unfitness, he should make himself fit for the future by reflecting on the present fitness which has resulted from the infinite greatness of the Saviour which brooks no questioning, like those who construct a dam for the water that will come up in the future; he should not stray from the path of performing the commands and permissions of the Lord which are in keeping with his present state as a *prapanna*. As described (by the Alvar), the [53]senses which have become tired with expectations of enjoy-

48. Bodhayana Sutra: 14–10
49. Satvata Samhita: 16–23–24
50. Vaikunta Stava: 61
51. Vankipuram Nambi: Karika: 31
52. Tiruvoimozhi: 1–3–8
53. Tiruvoimozhi: 3–8 (1–10)

ing the Lord should be rendered fit (to enjoy Him) by means of pure food and service and directed towards such (spiritual) experiences as are available and turned away from the desire for unwholesome objects, like cows that are turned away from stealthily eating the crops.

When people are waiting for the boat in order (to cross the stream) to go to a place of their desire, some of them may avoid playing chess or other game with stakes, as it could not be stopped whenever desired but may be engaged in playing the game without any stakes so that they might be in a position to give up the game (when the boat has come). Though they play merely for the enjoyment (and not for money), they move the pawns (on the board) in strict accordance with the rules of the game. In the same way (though the *prapanna* does not expect any profit out of it) he performs gladly the rites commanded and permitted by the Supreme Ruler, which are really services to the Lord, in accordance with the specific time and place at which they are ordained for performance. (In performing them), he should resemble not those who drink milk for relief from excess of bile, but like those who have got well easily and quickly with the help of a medicine and who drink milk with pleasure (not as a cure for disease).

*SERVICE TO ARCHĀ:*

While rendering this service, the *prapanna* should do such acts of service as are in keeping with the respective relationships between him and the Lord and with the Lord's supreme majesty and easy accesssibility; he should do these acts towards the images (*archā*) into which the Lord has incarnated for the sake of some devotees with exclusive devotion to Him; for it has been said :— "He who [54] believes in the eternal form and supreme majesty of the Lord — him, O Poushkara, the Lord approaches," "In the[55] same way as the water of the ocean taken up by the clouds and let fall

54. Poushkara Samhita :

55. Poushkara Samhita :

(as rain) becomes fit to be enjoyed by all, Bhagavan whose image has been installed by devotees becomes fit to be served and enjoyed by others". "The six [56]qualities like *Jnāna* are found in transcendent measure in the *mantras* and in the images (*archā*). They are described in the *mantras*, and the qulities are found in Bhagavan, since He has, out of His compassion, chosen to abide in these images". This shows the fullness of perfection, "He who[57] looks upon the Lord residing in the image as Purushottama and beholds Him (again and again) from the pedestal of the foot to the crown on the head—his five deadly sins (*Mahāpātaka*) are destroyed quickly. Is it necessary to state that minor offences, too, perish? This shows how supremely purificatory the *archā* is. And again it is said :— "If men[58] of clouded intellects happen to see Bhagavan abiding in the *archā* even by mere chance, all the evil tendencies in them, such as the following, perish :— the thought that the body is the self; the false notion arising from it that he sees the soul by perception; false conclusions arrived at by fallacious reasoning, false inferences resulting from wrong premises, false interpretations of scriptural texts and want of faith in the *S'āstras*." Thus the worship of the image (*archā*) is a panacea for all mental diseases arising from a false understanding of cause and effect.

The *prapanna* should meditate on the Lord's placing Himself at the disposal of those who seek His protection in a manner which cannot be understood by the mind or described in words, for it has been said, "Whoever[59] wants to see me and in whatever form — to him I reveal myself in that very form." The same thing is stated also (in the Tamil verse) "He assumes[60] the form desired by His devotees." He should also meditate on the alluring beauty of the Lord of which (the Alvar) says "The eyes[61] that have seen the Lord will refuse to see other things." Having

56. Vishvaksena Samhita:
57. Sandilya Smriti: 2-89
58. Poushkarasamhita
59. Bhagavad Gita: 4-11
60. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 44
61. Amalanadipiran: 10

done so, the *prapanna* should render service suited to the respective relationships between him and the Lord (such as master and servant, father and son) and to His supreme majesty and easy accessibility, in accordance with the following verses:—"One[62] should render service to the Lord like a chaste matron to her beloved husband, like a mother to her suckling, like a disciple to his *āchārya* and like a friend to his friend. The Lord of Lakshmi should always be looked upon as a master, as a friend, as an *āchārya*, as a father and as a mother". "One[63] should serve the Lord with as much fear as one would approach a king who is youthful, and an elephant in rut. In the same way as one would entertain a welcome guest who has come to one's house, one should worship the Lord with devotion, remembering His easy accessibility." "One [64]should treat the Lord with as much affection as one would a beloved child".

Like Bharatalvan who conducted himself like a servant of a king before (Sri Rama's) sandals and of whom it is said, "While the sandals[65] were ruling, Bharata placed, before them first, whatever business had to be transacted and whatever valuable tributes were brought and then accomplished whatever had to be done in the manner in which it should be done", — like him the *prapanna* should render service as to a king, with materials earned righteously. He should look upon this service as a wedded wife would look upon the careful custody of her sacred wedding - thread and the like He should have the conviction that he has attained this ultimate aim of life, which begins from service to Bhagavan and extends up to the service to His devotees, by his relationship with his good *Āchārya* : for it has been said :— "Kshatrabandhu, the great sinner, and Pundarika the virtuous, both attained *moksha* by having *Āchāryas*" So also has it been said (inTamil) :— "Our *āchāryas*[66] are like bees which place us at the (flower-like holy feet

62. Sandilya Smriti: 4–37–38
63. Sandilya Smriti: 4–31
64
65. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda 115–27
66. Tiruviruttam : 54

of the Lord, who is our Master and who renders help to the eternal *sūris*" and "If [67] Vishnuchittar (Perialvar) who was born in the city of Villiputtur and who was perfect in the qualities of the spirit, by some means in his power, make the Lord appear before us, we can see" (That is to say - without the grace of Vishnucitta, the *āchārya*, they cannot do anything themselves). The *prapanna* should feel grateful at the thought of the expansion of knowledge which the *āchāryas* have wrought in him and of such things as the service (of the Lord and His devotees) which have resulted from it. He should behave towards them as towards the servants (of the palace) who light the lamps and keep them burning on the night before the coronation of the prince (as a token of their rejoicing). He should feel grateful also to the Lord at the thought of His innate compassion which is the common and primary cause of all these and which, in the state of *mukti*, removes the dreaded possibility of a break in the enjoyment of Bhagavan whose independent will cannot be questioned. For it has been said:— "The Lord[68] makes us climb up to Vaikunta through the centre of the sphere of the sun whose rays dispel darkness and He removes the ladder that helped to climb, so that there may be no coming back", and again, "If [69] one goes to Vaikunta after performing *prapatti* by uttering the words '*Namo nāraṇa*', He will not let one come back to the world of *samsāra*, even if one should furnish security for going back to Vaikunta". (Nammalvar) says:— "The firm [70] feet of Narayana whose praise is unsurpassed" (the feet being firm, those who have caught hold of them can never slip down); and again "Bhagavan[71] is our Father who takes away from His devotees their future births, leads them to Vaikunta, helps the manifestation of their *svarūpa* or essential nature and sees to their ever remaining under His feet even like the lines on the soles (of His feet)", and further, "The Lord[72] looks after (our) welfare by taking us to His feet and by preventing our fall therefrom". The *prapanna*

67. Nachiar Tirumozhi: 10–10
68. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4–5–2
69. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4–5–2
70. Tiruvoimozhi: 1-2-10
71. Tiruvoimozhi: 3-7-7
72. Tiruvoimozhi: 7-5-10

should feel grateful to the Lord of Lakshmi, the *s'eshī*, whose will is ever absolute and who, even after *moksha*, shows the same compassion as during *samsāra*. ( The Alvar describes this compassion in the following words);— "By Thy[73] grace and the grace of Thy Spouse who lives in the lotus, I served at Thy temple of old"

## *WHAT THE PRAPANNA SHOULD DO WITH HIS MIND, HIS SPEECH AND HIS BODY :*

About this code of conduct (of the *prapanna*) we will now state what is considered as the essence in regard to what should be avoided by the three senses *viz* the mind, the speech and the body and also in regard to what should be observed or followed by them ·— "Between poison ( *Visha* ) and the objects of sense ( *Vishaya* ) there is a great gulf of difference, for poison kills only the man who eats it, whereas objects of sense kill even at their mere thought." It has been said also, "Is it [75]fair on Thy part to delude my soul by showing before sinful me the various pleasures by which the senses allure me to my suffering?" Therefore in order that the desire for the ultimate object of life may not languish, the most important among those that should be forgotten is the enjoyment of sense pleasures. In order that one may not become ungrateful, the chief thing that should be thought of is the assistance given to us by the *āchārya* from the time his glance first fell on us. In order that we may not lose the sense of helplessness, the chief thing that should be avoided in speech is the expression of our excellence. In order that one may not forget one's conviction in the *upāya*, the chief among the things that should be uttered is *Dvaya*; as (the Bhashyakara says) " [76]one should ever utter the *Dvaya* with an understanding of its meaning ". In order that Bhagavan who is entitled to receive our service with pleasure may not become displeased at heart, the most important among those that should be

73. Tiruvoimozhi: 9-2-1
74.
75. Tiruvoimozhi: 6-9-9
76. Saranagati gadyam.

avoided by all the three senses is offence to those that know Brahman; as Andal says, "We[77] will never do what ought not to be done". In order that the sea of our supreme aim in life may not dry up or become shallow, the most important among those things that should be done is service to the *āchārya* and other devotees of *Bhagavān* as ordained in the *S'āstras* and as forming the outer limit of the service of the Lord.

This code of conduct which should be followed after *prapatti* and which is an end in itself should be considered in those parts of the three mysteries (*mantras*) which indicate the benefit or fruit that results.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Our holy men who know the songs of the Tamil Veda with their meaning and who have discharged all their debts (to the gods, the pitris etc.) by the performance of *prapatti* accepted by Sri Krishna of the beautiful Dwaraka, enjoy, with delight, even in this world, that service which the *mūktas* and the *sūris* perform without intermission and with eagerness in the world yonder.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

Like a beloved wife who, in a big jewelled mirror, well-polished, sees her loving husband by the side of her own image — her loving husband who has come behind her and stands beside her, and is at once transported into the ecstasy of love and enjoys his presence with the scattering of flowers that spread their fragrance all round — (like that beloved wife) good men, whose wealth consists in their *prapatti*, see the Supreme lord in the great *mantra* (Tirumantra) which has frequently been meditated upon and enjoy Him with loving service similar to fragrant flowers.

---

77. Tiruppavai: 2

## (16) THE CHAPTER ON THE FARTHEST EXTENT OF OUR ULTIMATE OBJECT IN LIFE.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :

In the world of everyday life (a king sometimes uses his dependents and ornaments to serve the purposes of those who are dear to him like his sons, wives etc.) and in the *Vedas*, it is declared that all the gods make their offerings to the devotee. Even so, the Lord of Lakshmi uses sentient beings and non-sentient things to serve for ever the purposes of those who have won His regard, because He is independent and is their Master. So, for us whose minds have been disciplined by the teaching of such as the prince of *sannayāsins* (*viz.* Sri Ramanuja), the service of the Lord extends as far as the service of those who are dear to Him (Bhagavatas).

### *REASONS FOR RENDERING SERVICE TO BHĀGAVATĀS.*

If it is asked here how it can be stated that the service of Bhagavan extends up to the service of His devotees (the Bhagavatas), the answer is as follows:—It has been said in the *Vedartha Sangraha*: "He is the *s'esha* whose *svarūpa* or essential nature is such as is chosen on account of the desire to promote the glory of another and that another is the *s'eshī*." So in regard to the Supreme Ruler of all, the *Jīva* who is the *s'esha* is bound to promote His glory. That glory will depend on the nature of the *s'esha*, whether it be sentient or non-sentient. It may be asked, "What is the glory that the *jīva* is capable of conferring on the Supreme Being? With his body and the like, he can confer only such glory as non-sentient things do. So this service is common to him and *acit*. The special glory that he can be the cause of promoting must be by means of his intelligence or *chaitanya*. *When the

---

NOTE :—* In the sentences that follow the author points out the different ways in which different kinds of people (including those who violate his commands) promote His glory as His *seshas*

*jīva* acts against the spirit of the *s'āstras*, Iswara, who is the Ruler and the Dispenser of punishment, enjoys only the delight or delectation of *līlā* and thus attains *atis'aya* glory. It has been said:- "Bhagavan, [1]who has all beings as His body, rejoices when a *jīva* does what is good and does not rejoice when the action is evil." When a man acts in accordance with the *s'āstras*, he gives thereby delight to the Lord and thus does not let his generosity and other qualities run to waste, but promotes the glory of the Lord so that He extols him as in the words :—"All these are[2], indeed, generous". In the same way as the *muktas* (released souls) and the *nityas* (the *sūris*) promote the glory of the Lord by direct perception of the Lord's will and by acting in such a way as to give Him *bhoga* or enjoyment, the *prapannas*, too, can give rise to a special kind of *bhoga* or enjoyment to the Lord and thus promote His glory as stated in the following *s'loka*:—" When shall I [3]always be Thy servant, look upon Thee as my Master and in this way give Thee delight?". The *prapanna* learns the Lord's will from the *s'āstras* (though not directly) and renders service to the Lord.

## *THE LORD IS PLEASED AT THE SERVICE RENDERED TO HIS DEVOTEES :*

When a man gives rise to Iswara's *līlā rasa* by actions opposed to the *s'āstras*, it will end in his ruin. If, in the state of bondage, he acts according to the Lord's will as revealed in the *s'āstras* and, in the state of *moksha*, by direct perception of the Lord's will, he will not only promote the Lord's *līlā rasa* and *bhoga* but incidentally attain his own desired objects. When the *Jīva* acts on any occasion consciously, since his desired fruit, incidental though it be, has to come from the will of the lord, the latter has to be ascertained from the *s'astras* which disclose that the service rendered to His devotees is most delightful to him.

1. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 199-25
2. Bhagavad Gita: 7-18
3. Alavandar Stotram : 46

The following authoritative texts may be studied in this connection: "Of all [4]forms of homage, the homage paid to Vishnu is the best, but superior even to this, is the excellent homage or adoration offered to Vishnu's devotees", "I have [5]great affection to those who are devoted to my devotees. Therefore should one render devout service to them." "Devotion[6] to me is of eight forms:— (1) love to my devotees without any thought of their faults; (2) rejoicing at the adoration offered to me by another; (3) delight in listening to stories concerning me; (4) a change in the voice, in the eyes and in the body, while listening to such stories; (5) trying to offer adoration to me; (6) freedom from hypocrisy in one's relations with me; (7) meditation of me at all times; (8) and not considering me as one from whom worldly benefits can be had — if *bhakti* (which is of these eight forms) is found in a *mleccha*, he should be respected as the best of Brahmins endowed with *jnāna* and *bhakti*; he is a real *sannyāsī*, he is a wise man and he may be taught (the scriptures) and from him one may learn the truth. He is fit to be adored even like myself.", "They are [7]my *bhaktas* or devotees who do not show devotion to any other deity, who love those that are devoted to me and that have sought me as their *upāya*", "I [8]offer adoration also to those who offer adoration to that *yajna varāha*, who is of boundless splendour". 'By [8]seeking the protection of those who seek the Lord as their refuge and by rendering service to him who is devoted to the devotee, that is (in turn) devoted to the devotee of the Lord — by doing so, men are released from all their sins."

When we study these passages, (it beomes clear) that, of all forms of service which a *śesha* of the Lord may render, that rendered to the Bhagavatas is the most important and is the most pleasing to the Lord, in the same way as the fondling of the prince is most pleasing to the king.

4. Padmottaram : 29–81

5. Mahabharata: Aswamedika Parva: 116–23

6. Garuda purana: 219–6–9

7. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva: 104–91

8. Garuda puranam :

In this matter, if we examine the path of the *pramānas*, Iswara, who has the Bhagavata as His body, is the object of worship as is declared in the *s'loka*: "Those who [9]worship the *pitris*, the gods, the Brahmins and Agni -- they worship only the Lord who is the inner self of all creatures" If, on the other hand, we consider the thought of the *Prakarī* who says "He is dear to me also" and who is ever at the disposal of the man that is exclusively devoted to Him on account of His love for him, as has been said in the *s'loka*: "Among them the *jnānī* [10]is my very self" the Lord would be pleased at the service rendered to the *Bhāgavata*, as if it were service rendered (directly) to His own inner self and not as that done to His body.

In addition to its causing plassure to the *s'eshī*, the relationship of the *jīva* to Iswara as His *s'esha* is also mediately through the Bhagavata. Therefore his service to the Lord may also be mediate through the *Bhagavata*. This may be explained as follows :—

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

To the Supreme Being who is always with Lakshmi and who looks upon His devotees as His very self, the attribute of being a *s'eshī* may be both by being a *s'eshī* along with Lakshmi and by being a *s'eshī* mediately through the devotees". (That is, those who look upon themselves as *s'eshas* to His devotees are, mediately through these devotees, *s'eshas* to the Lord Himself). A king who is independent and who takes a pleasure in acting as he pleases places the ornaments and garlands worn by himself round the necks of his servants and of his elephants and horses. (Tiruppanalvar says):— "The Lord who [11]is spotless and who has made me the servant of His servants". (So does Narada say):— "I, Narada, [12]have come here with an eager longing to see you. To men like me, O Brahmin, those who are *bhaktas* of the Lord are masters" and again (Tirumangai Alvar says); — "I will not[13]

9. Mahabharata: Santi parva
Daksha Smriti:
10. Bhagavad Gita: 7–18
11. Amlanadipiran: 1
12. Padmotharam: 81 – 52
13. Peria Tirumozhi: 8–10-3

remain in the company of those who think there is any other deity deserving of adoration than Thee; also what I have accepted with delight is the duty of serving Thy devotees". According to these passages, since the *jīva* is absolutely subject to the will of the Lord and since the service of the *s'esha* is due also to those who are favourites of the Lord, our being a *s'esha* to the Lord extends even to the Bhagavatas and should last as long as the self lasts. Our being *s'eshas* to Bhagavatas arises from their being devotees to the Lord and pertains to our essential nature. It arises also from their qualities and knowledge, which cause a desire in us to serve them. (As Lakshmana says) "I [14]am his younger brother (by birth); I have become his servant by his qualities", (That this relationship of being a *s'esha* is due both to our essential nature and to (our admiration for) their wisdom and character) is also indicated (respectively in the two phrases(1) "*bhaktas* of the lord and to "*men like me*" (in the speech of Narada quoted above). Perialvar, the (great) commentator of *Kalpa sūtras* stated (in this connection):— "These who are [15] the servants of Bhagavatas and who utter the names of Bhagavan are entitled even to sell us". This is the purport of the middle world in *Tirumantra*, namely, *namo: na mama* (not for me). If we reflect on this purport, our being *s'esha* to the Lord is both mediate (through the Bhagavatas) and immediate (direct to Him). Accordingly, the service that should be rendered by the *s'esha* is also (both) mediate and direct. Therefore it is the farthest limit of the service of the *prapanna* to perform, as much as it lies in his power, service to the *Bhāgavata*, since it is part of the duty of one who is *s'esha* to *Bhagavān*. So this outermost region of service to Bhagavatas should be kept propeıly cultivated so that it may not become fallow land full of weeds.

As stated in the following *s'lokas* in *Poushkara samhitā*, "It is [16]not wrong for a wedded wife to honour her husband and to honour his servants, whether in his presence or in his absence."

14. Ramayana: Kishkindhakanda: 4-12
15. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4-4-10
16. Poushkara Samhita

and "Among[17] the Lord's retinue are two classes: those that are dear to him and worthy of His trust and those who are not. To the former class belong the *nityas*, the *muktas* and the *Bhāgavatās*. To the latter class belong Brahma and the other gods who are subject to the sway of past *karma*. The seeker after *mukti* should not adore the latter;" the devotee who is exclusively attached to the Lord and whose *dharma* resembles that of a chaste wife would therefore do well to act according to the will of his Lord. Since the relationship of *s'esha* to Bhagavatas arises from no other cause than the knowledge of our being *s'esha* only to the Lord and to no other, this service to Bhagavatas is not improper, (because it does not arise from other causes like the desire for wealth or power).

*BHĀGAVATĀS ARE S'ESHAS TO ONE ANOTHER:*

If it is asked whether this relationship of being *s'esha* to *Bhāgavatās* is due to one's nature or whether it is adventitious (due to *upādhi*), the answer is, that it is both natural and adventitious. In as much as it lasts as long as the self lasts and will continue also in the state of *moksha*, it may be called natural. (Does not *Koorattalvan* say):— "When shall I join the eternal *sūris* who are always eager to be *s'eshas to one another?*" (This relationship of a *s'esha* will continue even after release from bondage). It may be said to be adventitious also (due to *upādhi* or conditions), as it arises from a knowledge of one's relationship to Bhagavan.

If so, it may be asked, "If both are *Bhāgavatas*, would it not be inconsistent that they should be both *s'esha* and *s'eshī* to each other?" The answer is as follows:—There is nothing inconsistent in this, as it is possible for the same person to render help to another and also to receive help from him. (In the performance of a sacrifice), the sacrificer who performs it for the sake of some gain or benefit (*phala*) is the *s'eshi* but when he is considered as the doer of the sacrifice, he is *s'esha* in relation to the sacrifice.

17. Poushkara Samhita:

18. Vaikunta gadya: 77

So also when each of the two *Bhāgavatas* is bent on promoting the glory (*atis'aya*) of the other, without either of them expecting that glory, they become *s'eshas* by their being the cause of the promotion of the glory of the other; they are also *s'eshīs* inasmuch as they are the recipients of the glory (*atis'aya*), though they themselves may not desire it. Since they have been directed by Iswara's will to promote each other's glory, the relationship of being *s'esha* to *Bhāgavatas* is, in the case of both, based on *s'āstraic* authority.

The relationship of being a servant (*dāsa*) to Bhagavan and *Bhāgavatās* owing to an appreciation of their qualities or character adds to one's delight or enjoyment and promotes one's own exaltation. In this, Iswara, by His omnipotence and His will which accompanies it, enables all *Bhāgavatas* to become *s'eshīs.* Taking their desire also along with His own will, Iswara makes them *s'eshas* to *Bhāgavatas.* Since both the Bhagavatas stand in the relation of *s'eshīs* to each other as having been fit to be directed by the Master to do His will, both of them attain their true and essential nature (*svarūpa*). They attain the ultimate limit of their *purushārtha* or goal of life, since they attain the relationship of being *s'eshas,* which they are eager to have and also the privilege of rendering service to the *Bhāgavata* which follows from it. Since Iswara delights in having directed them to become *s'eshas* and *s'eshīs* to each other, Iswara attains the state of being an Iswara or ruler and of being an *enjoyer.* Since they realise clearly that this relationship of being *s'eshas* and *s'eshīs* to each other contributes to the enjoyment (*bhoga*) of Iswara, they attain the faultless and ultimate limit of *purushārtha* By those who have done what should be done (*prapannas*), who understand this subtle truth and are convinced of it, the grace of devotees who are exclusively and supremely attached to the Lord will be desired as an end in itself - devotees who are free from the following stains :— the desire for transgressing the Lord's commands, excess of doubt, connection with other deities, enjoyment depending on one's own effort and enjoyment for one's own self.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

We that accept the code of conduct prescribed by the Lord, whose auspicious qualities fill, with astonishment, *Bhāgavatas* who have understood the meaning of the Vedas — we conduct ourselves in such a way that we do not deviate from the righteous path ordained in the eternal Vedas in rendering service to His good devotees with extreme reverence to them.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :*

With our words which emit a fragrance that would be eagerly desired by the lotus which arose in the pond of the Lord's navel, we do not beg of the Lord the pleasures of this world and of *svarga* which are like straw nor *kaivalya* nor even *moksha* We only pray that we should have the grace of the pure and firm-minded *Bhāgavatas*, who are like the chaste wives in the royal harem, for their grace is like the dawn which heralds the day of the splendour of *moksha*.

## (17) THE CHAPTER ON THE ORDINANCES IMPOSED BY THE SASTRAS.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

Having laid, on Mukunda, the responsibility for his protection and become free from sin like those released from *samsāra*, the *prapanna* walks along the path laid down in the *s'āstras* until his release from bondage, since (unlike the *mukta*) he cannot read the mind of the lord directly and since the path has been ordained for us by the command of the Omnipotent Lord and since, by straying from that path, he will immediately bring, on himself and on others, ills of various kinds.

### *THE PRAPANNA SHOULD HAVE THE S'ĀSTRA FOR HIS GUIDE:*

(It has been stated so far that) owing to his relationship as a *s'esha*, the *prapanna* has to render service to Bhagavan and to *Bhāgavatās*. Now it may be asked whether this service arises from his desire and in accordance with the *s'āstras* or from his mere desire without any reference at all to the *s'āstras*. The answer is as follows. To the man who is in this world full of the darkness of ignorance, the *s'āstra* is required as a lamp (to show the path that he should take). So the service that he is to render should be according to the *s'āstra*; in matters where the *s'āstra* gives an option or alternatives, he may follow his own discretion. "How is this"? it may be asked. When Sri Ramanuja was about to leave this world, he observed his foremost disciples grieving exceedingly. He called them to his side and commanded them on pain of offence to Alavandar not to think of taking their own lives owing to their sorrow at his death. "They will (if they do so) have no connection with me", he said. On hearing this, they were filled with sorrow and begged that they might be told what they should do thereafter. This was Sri Ramanuja's reply:—

*S'RI RAMANUJA'S ADVICE :*

"If a man has become a *prapanna*, the salvation of his soul or self is the responsibility of Bhagavan, and he himself has nothing to do with it. If he thinks that he has anything to do with it, his surrender of responsibility (*prapatti* or *ātma samarpaṇam*) must have been false or insincere. The maintenance of the *body* depends upon his past *karma*, and he should not feel anxious about it. If he feels anxious about it, he is a sceptic or *nāstika*. Therefore neither in regard to his spiritual welfare nor in regard to his bodily welfare, has he anything more to do. If so, it may be asked whether the man might go about doing whatever he liked with his three kinds of organs, mind, speech and body. The answer is that doing so is not in keeping with his *svarūpa* or essential nature. It is true that he has nothing (more) to do with regard to the *upāya* or means, but he should direct these *viz.*, mind, speech and body to the rendering of service which is the goal of his existence. There are five kinds of service which he can render for the rest of his life :— (1) to study the *Bhashya* and to spread the knowledge obtained therefrom ; (2) if the man is not qualified for it, to study the writings of the Alvars and spread their knowledge ; (3) if the man is not competent to do it (*i. e.*) No. (2), to serve in holy temples sanctified (by the Alvars), by cooking food, by making *chandanam*, by lighting lamps and by weaving garlands (for use in the temples); (4) if not competent to do (3), to meditate on the meaning of *Dvaya;*; (5) if not competent to do (4), to seek the good will of some *S'ri Vaishṇava* who is well disposed to him and would look upon him as his follower and spend his life with him.

*PITFALLS IN THE PATH OF THE PRAPANNA :*

The man who is qualified to live in this way has to avoid pitfalls in front of him by behaving carefully in three matters. They concern — (1) those who are suitable or favourable (*anukūla*) (2) those who are unsuitable or unfavourable (*pratikūla*) and (3) those who are neither the one nor the other. The suitable are

Sri Vaishnavas, the unsuitable are those that are the enemies of Bhagavan; those who are neither the one nor the other are those in *samsāra*. The *prapanna* will rejoice at the sight of the suitable (*anukūla*) as at *chandana*, flowers and the like and as at moonlight and the southern breeze and (other) beloved objects. At the sight of the unsuitable (*pratikūla*), he will be full of dread as at the sight of the serpent and the fire. At the sight of those who are neither of these two, he will behave as at the sight of wood or stone and treat them (with indifference), as if they were straw. If they are agreeable, he should impart the knowledge of truth to them;, otherwise, he should pity their sad fate. It is the inclination for wealth and sensual pleasure that stands in the way of such behaviour. If, owing to the desire for wealth and sense pleasures, a man should treat a Sri Vaishnava with disregard or contempt, he would provoke the wrath of Bhagavan in the same way as a man who treats the prince with disrespect in the presence of the king would provoke the king's anger. If, owing to the desire for wealth and sense pleasures, a man should remain subservient to those who are unsuitable, he would provoke disgust in the mind of Bhagavan in the same way as a queen who, while her lord is an emperor, begs alms of the mean and unworthy would provoke disgust in the king's mind. If a man should treat with respect those who are neither the one nor the other, the Lord would have no regard for him, as his knowledge serves no useful purpose like that of one who cannot distinguish between a gem and a piece of stone".

### *S'RI RAMANUJA'S ADVICE EXPLAINED:*

In connection with this code of conduct prescribed by Sri Ramanuja for the *prapanna*, we have to remember that the pursuit of wealth and sense pleasures which are against *dharma* have already been prohibited altogether (for all including non-*prapannas*) as in the following *s'lokas*:— "One should not[1], in any circumstances and even in critical times, accept any gifts, not

1. Sandilya Smriti: 3-18

even a cowrie, from an unchaste woman, a eunuch, an out-caste (*patita*) or an enemy." "They[2] are dear to me - they who are born blind to the imperfections of others, who are eunuchs in regard to the wives of other men and who are dumb in the matter of censuring others." So the injunction contained in the *Bhāshyakāra's* words (really) means that even in regard to the acquisition of wealth and sense-pleasures which are not opposed to *dharma*, the *prapanna* should not deviate from his proper state in regard to these three classes of persons, the suitable, the unsuitable and those who are neither of these two. That those who are suitable should not be treated with disregard is declared in *S'andilya smriti* (4–86) "A householder does not like one who treats his son with disregard; so also Bhagavan does not like those who do not treat his *bhaktas* with due respect." That those who are unsuitable should not be associated with, is declared in the *Mahābharata:* "Those who [3]hate Kesava, the Supreme Being, and cannot, meditate on Him — to them and to those who associate with them with respect, there will be no benefit at all from bathing in the holy waters". So also it it said:— "One [4]should not associate with fools, with those who are addicted to sin, with those who are cruel by nature, and with those who criticise adversely the *s'āstras* of *Bhagavān* (Pancharatra). Association with them will put an end to *bhakti*". That those who are neither the one nor the other should be treated like straw is well known from *s'lokas* like the following:— "O men of[5] the world, from this day onwards, you are what you are and we are what we are. You are in quest of wealth and sense pleasures; we are in quest of Narayana. (So) there cannot be any companionship between you and us. We are the servants of the Lord; you are the slaves of the senses". The words that the *prapanna* should walk warily (lest he should fall into pitfalls) indicate that the (five) services ordained as essential by the *Bhāshyakāra* (in his words quoted above) stand in the same category as services like *Sandhyāvandana* which can be

2. Vishnu Dharma: 76-22
3. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 336-36
4. Sandilya Smriti: 1-120
5. ?

learnt only from the *s'āstras* and that, for that reason, these five, too, should be done in accordance with the injunctions prescribed in the *s'āstras*, in order that they may become real and proper services. It may be asked: ("How can his (Sri Ramanuja's) words be interpreted to include also those rites and duties that are prescribed in the *s'āstras* and that these five services which he has specifically mentioned should also be done according to the *s'āstras?*") The answer is that it is clear from the *Bhāshyakāra's* words :— "If he should go about doing as he likes, it would be against his *svarūpa* or essential nature." As Alavandar puts it, "Whatever [5]agrees not with the *s'āstras* is *Āsuric* in nature; those actions that are opposed to the *s'āstras* are inconsistent with his nature which is godly". Further it has been said by the Lord who is entitled to our service :— "The [6]*s'ruti* and the *smritis* are indeed my commands. He who transgresses them violates my commands. He does injury to me. Though he may be devoted to me he should not be called a *Vaishnava*". Sri Ramanuja's meaning is that, since the Master has also made this declaration, the *prapanna* should serve in accordance with the *s'āstras* as long as he lives in the body. In his *Gītārtha Sangraha*, Alavandar says :— "From the[7] *karmas* pertaining to one's *varna* and *ās'rama* to *bhaktiyoga*, one should perform everything, directed by love alone (of the Lord). One should give up the notion that these are *upāyas* or means (for attaining one's ends). One should place the *upāya* without fear on God; (*i.e*) one should realise that Bhagavan is alone the *upāya*)". It is obvious that 'by love alone' excludes the notion that it is an *upāya* owing to the word 'alone' and this idea is elaborated in "having given up the notion that these are *upāyas* or means". It is true that, that the love (of the Lord) is indicated as having a wonderful power of inspiring one to service prescribed in the *s'āstra*. But in the words "from the *karmas* pertainingto one's *varṇa* and *ās'rama*", it is shown that the nature of these *karmas* has to be ascertained only from the *s'āstras*.

5. Gitartha Sangraha : 21
6. Vishnu Dharma : 6–31
7. Gitartha Sangraha : 31

This ordinance imposed by the *s'āstras* is well known from the following *s'lokas* in the chapter on *prapatti* :— " In order[8] that there may be no violation of *dharma*, for the protection of the family, for keeping ignorant men in the right path by setting them an example, for the preservation of the moral law as defined in the *s'āstras*, for my ( Lakshmi's ) satisfaction and for the satisfaction of the Lord armed with *S'arnga* who is the God of all gods, the *prapanna* who is wise should not even think of transgressing the ordinances of the Veda ". The evil that would result from the transgression is described immediately afterwards as follows :— " Even a king's[9] favourite, who, because it serves no purpose of his own, destroys the bund of a river dug by the king's orders, which is of great use to the world, is beautiful in itself and causes abundance of crops,— even he will be impaled for having done so ). So also though he may be dear, the man who violates the ordinances of the Vedas is no favourite of mine inasmuch as he violates my commands." If, having offended the Lord, the *prapanna* does not seek pardon, it will produce, before he attains *mukti*, some evil or other in accordance with his specific qualification.

That apart, there is no greater hell ( for the *prapanna*) than the displeasure caused to *Bhagavān*. This displeasure of Bhagavan will disappear if he obtains pardon. (As the *Gīta* says) Iswara, by His very nature, is full of love to all. So till His displeasure disappears, it will give the *prapanna* excruciating pain. If the man has no such pain, his devotion to the Master and his desire for rendering service after *moksha* have to be doubted.

Since this violation of the Lord's command is opposed to the Lord's pleasure which is our final goal as stated in the *s'loka* :— "When shall I, Thy servant, look upon Thee alone as my Master and

8. The words of Lakshmi in Lakshmi tantram: 17 - 93, 94
9. Lakshmi tantram: 17 - 95,96, 97
10. Alavandar Stotram: 46

give the delight by rendering service?" the observance of the ordinances of the *sāstras* has to be understood in those places in the three mysteries (*mantras*) where the removal of obstacles is referred to. In the case of those who have not completed their adoption of (*prapatti*) the *upāya*, the observance of these ordinances will remove the hindrances or obstacles to the completion of *prapatti* and win for them the grace of the Lord. In the case of those whose adoption of the *upāya* is complete, it will win the favour of the Lord by removing the causes that might bring about His displeasure (in future).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The paths indicated in the *s'āstras* deal with acts or rites of two kinds: obligatory and permissive. The former have to be done for avoiding the Lord's punishment and the latter for obtaining the respective benefits.

Even when a permissible act is performed, if there is violation of the prescribed method, it becomes an offence or violation of the command Therefore transgression of the rule prescribed in the *s'āstra* is nowhere countenanced.

When the same rite is prescribed both for avoiding a transgression and for obtaining a benefit — in that rite, there is a mingling of competency (*adhikāra*) according to scholars. When the same *karma* or rite is prescribed as *nitya* (obligatory) and also *kāmya* (for the sake of a benefit), the act or rite performed for the specific benefit will serve (also) as the performance of the *nitya* (by that single performance).

In rites (*karmas* or services) prescribed for the attainment of certain benefits, the benefit will not be obtained, when the service is not performed, but there is no transgression. Such is the opinion of competent scholars.

*TAMIL VERSE*:

By following the four Vedas (and the Smritis and other *s'astras*) in which the Supreme Being who measured the three worlds with His feet has ordained what is right and what is wrong, we have attained the state of service similar to that of the eternal *sūris* who are full of the love (of God). To us who live in the dark night (of *samsāra*), there is no other light than that of this moon (*viz.* the *s'āstras*) to dispel the darkness that grows denser and denser at every step.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The wise man learns what is in accordance with the will of the Ruler* who is the originator of the Universe; from the Srutis; from the Smritis; and from the traditional practice of elders; from the promptings of his own reason in the case of the man with a pure heart; from good resolutions not departing from *dharma*; and also the traditional practice of the family, of the †*charana* and of the country. Sometimes he tries to understand the Lord's will from the commands of those who are competent to direct him and also from omens, signs, dreams and the like.

---

* *Niyamayitur adeh* may mean also 'the Primeval Ruler'

† *Charana*: the *acharas* which pertain to the respective *veda* to which the man belongs.

## (18) THE CHAPTER ON THE ATONEMENT FOR OFFENCES.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

This embodied being (the *Jīva*) obtains the grace of Madhava by the result of past *karma* (luck), for the removal of his sins—the grace of Madhava which, by its purity, delightfulness, holiness and efficacy is like the (holy) *Mandākinī* whose waters are clear, sweet, always pure (white) and efficacious. (That is, he becomes a *prapanna*). If, in spite of this, he still makes his body unclean by wallowing in the mire of the stream of wretched sense pleasures, his company is avoided by the wise (but this would not stand in the way of his attainment of *moksha* after death).

### *THE PRAPANNA IS NOT LIKELY TO OFFEND; IF HE OFFENDS, HE SHOULD PERFORM PRĀYAS'CHITTA.*

Since the *prapanna* has, by nature, the sole character of a *s'esha* to *Bhagavān* and since he delights only in rendering service to Him in accordance with the ordinances of the *s'astras*, it is not at all likely that, in other situations than those that are dangerous, he will offend against the Lord, as it would be opposed to his adopted state of being the exclusive servant of the Lord. If as a result of past *karma* which has begun to operate (*prārabdha*) and under adverse conditions of place, time and circumstance, slight offences (against the Lord) take place through inattention in the waking state or (without his knowledge) in dreamless sleep (*sushupti*) and other such states, these offences will disappear without causing any stain. If, at the time of *prapatti*, he did not beg, with dread of them, for the removal of such sins as lead to further sins, since he is still in close association with *prakriti* like one who lives under the same roof with a serpent, it is just possible that, owing to his deficiency in spiritual qualities, certain lapses

which are inconsistent with his state as a *prapanna* might, as in the case of weak-hearted Rishis, even occur with his knowledge. If such lapses do occur, the Lord of Lakshmi, who, by His very nature, is his well-wisher, stands ever ready to save him. Therefore these lapses in his actions will only be momentary like lightning; he will quickly reflect on these lapses from his state as a *prapanna*, feel ashamed at them, repent of them, and perform the proper atonement (*prāyas'chitta*) that is suited to his competence. The following *s'lokas* explain the point:— "If there is [1]offence, the atonement that is to be done is only the performance of *prapatti* again. If, after performing *prapatti* for the sake of *moksha*, a man should perform *karma yoga* and the like *with the thought that* these are *upāyas* (to *moksha*), it would also constitute an offence. In order that this offence might disappear, *prapatti* alone should be performed again". "Whether a [2]man commits an offence knowing that it is an offence or does it without knowing it to be one, the only atonement (*prāyas'chitta*) that has to be performed is to beg in these words:— "Pardon the offence". So also Sita says:—

" [3]It is well known that Sri Rama knows what *Dharma* is and is fond of those who seek refuge under him. Seek his friendship if you desire to live. Propitiate Sri Rama who loves those that surrender themselves to him and, with a pure heart, see that I am returned to him."

## *THE PRAPANNA WILL NEVER GO TO THE WORLD OF YAMA EVEN IF HE OFFENDS:*

When, owing to hard-heartedness due to past karma operating now (*prārabdha*), the *prapanna* does not obtain pardon by atonement, he will not go to the world of Yama (but receive punishment in this very life). For it has been said:— "Seeing[4]

1. Lakshmi Tantram · 17–91, 92
2. The verses of Vangipuram Nambi:
3. The words of Sita to Ravana: Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 21, 20–21
4. Vamana Purana: 94–31.

his attendants with the noose (of death) in their hands, Yama whispers in their ears :— "Do not approach those who have performed *prapatti* at (the feet of) Madhusudana. I have sway only over others and not over the devotees of Vishnu". And again :— "O Thou[5] with lotus-like eyes, O Vasudeva, O Vishnu, O Thou that bearest the earth, O Thou that art armed with the conch and the discus, be Thou my refuge" — those that utter these words — leave them at a distance for they are not sinners", and further, "Those that perform[6] *prapatti* to Vishnu, the God who is armed with *s'ārnga*, never go to the world of Yama, for *naraka* is not their dwelling place." As stated above in such treatises as *Vishnupurāṇa* and *Vāmanapurāṇa* and the passages in the *s'rutis* on which they are based, they do not go to the land of Yama, but they are punished with the blindness of an eye, or the lameness of a leg, or some such thing and thus relieved of their burden (of sin). (They will be punished in this life itself here) on the analogy of one (who is dear) being punished with the prick of a thorn instead of being stabbed with a spear. The Supreme Lord, being possessed of forgiveness, kindness, compassion and over-flowing love, relents in His anger and protects the *prapanna* after a light punishment in this very life for his offence. An emperor, who is to be duly served, punishes his attendants (like those who carry the umbrellas), the servants of the harem like the hunchbacks and the dwarfs and so also the princes, in proportion to their offences and (also) to such things as their closeness to Him. (He punishes them) for having committed offences, in spite of his affection to them due to their relationship and His goodness. (He punishes them) so that they may obtain pardon for their offences and know that, in future, they may not offend (in the same manner). The punishments are such as the following :— averting his face from them, whipping, getting them driven out, keeping them outside the gates and suspension for a short time. Similarly Iswara punishes the *prapanna*, as Sri Rama

5. Yama's words: Vishnupurana: 3-7-33
6. Vamanapurana: 94-43

did in the case of Kakasura by making him lose an eye and thus protects him.

Directing those that are gentle to obtain pardon (by atonement) and punishing those that are tough by nature for the sake of correction are of the nature of the Lord's forgiveness, which is a consequence of their *prapatti* that preceded it. One should therefore feel grateful to the Lord for this correction. To emphasize this point, some said that the Lord would pardon even those sins that are committed deliberately. (They did not mean to say that deliberate offences would be pardoned without any punishment).

### *PRAPATTI WILL NEVER BE IN VAIN:*

It should not be thought that, because sins committed deliberately after *prapatti* and not atoned for would be followed by their consequences like that part of *prārabdha karma* which is of the nature of sin, the *prapatti* performed before would not yield *moksha*. When asafoetida is applied to the root of a tree for making it wither, the tree is sure to wither sooner or later, according to the nature of the soil and other conditions; (but there is no doubt that it will wither; it will do so, perhaps after a little more time). So also in the case of these *prapannas* who have committed sins deliberately, there will be difference only with regard to the delay in the complete release from *samsāra*. If they desire to have *moksha* at the end of this life and cannot brook delay and if the period of their life-time is not previously fixed, there will be delay in *moksha* by the life-time being extended. To those whose period of life-time is already fixed, *prapatti* will certainly bear fruit within that time.

### *DISCUSSION OF THE VIEW THAT EVEN DELIBERATE OFFENCES COMMITTED BY A PRAPANNA WILL NOT AFFECT HIM ADVERSELY.*

It may be asked "Even after Sita Devi promised protection to the Rakshasis by saying "I will [7] protect you," when these

7. Sita's words: Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 58-90

Rakshasis offended her again deliberately, were their sins not forgiven when Sita Devi said, "I forgive[8] their offences as I cannot bear their sufferings" and "Whether[9] they deserve punishment for their sins or whether they have not committed any sins (deserving of punishment), you should pardon them because of your generous nature — There is no one that is above fault"? The answer is as follows :— "Even here, the Rakshasis were afraid that Hanuman was about to punish them severely and were afterwards saved from it. So there was, as in the raising of the sword (to strike a person), a slight punishment (fear) and (then) forgiveness. Therefore, when it is sometimes stated that even sins committed deliberately by a *prapanna*, would not cling to him, the statement has no authority in support of it. It is also sometimes stated that the *prapanna* need not atone for his sins even when he has committed them deliberately, and that, even if he has not atoned for them, there will be no punishment by way of teaching him a lesson. It is sometimes maintained also that when such offences have been committed, there will be no delay in the attainment of the supreme goal even for those who are impatient of delay and that there will be no intermission or diminution in the services which have come to a man as the result of meritorious *karma* in the past bearing fruit in this life. These propositions maintained by some (should not be taken as literally true); they are made just to glorify the attributes and qualities of the Saviour and the power of *prapatti* Otherwise there would be no meaning in the continued tradition of the observance, by previous *prapannas*, of the code of conduct prescribed for the *prapanna*, in the *s'astras* which prescribe methods of atonement for sins in the case of *prapannas*, and in the texts which say, that there will be delay in the attainment of *moksha* for those who did not perform *prapatti* indicating the time when they wanted to have it and are also impatient of delay while sinning deliberately. Though it is said as a general

8. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 116-44
9. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 116-44

statement, "I will [9A] release you from all sins", since it is qualified by a passage standing as a special case: "This atonement consists in the performance of *prapatti* once again", it is evident that the atonement for sins committed deliberately after *prapatti* is the performance of another *prapatti* It cannot be argued that this passage prescribing another *prapatti* is only for those who did not perform *prapatti* to cover also those subsequent sins that might be committed deliberately. This argument would carry weight, only if there were an explicit statement that *prapatti* might be performed to cover also future sins of a deliberate nature. (There is none such). If a man knows that the original *prapatti* may be made in such a way as to cover also future sins of a deliberate nature, there will be no one who will care to give up this easier method and thus the text prescribing a further *prapatti* will find none to adopt it. A general statement cannot contradict a statement made for a special or specific case (for the general statement covers only all cases except those specified in the special statement). If we hold that a general statement can sublate or contradict a special statement for specific cases, it would follow that, even in the case of one who adopts the *upāya* of *bhakti* or *upāsana*, subsequent sins committed deliberately would cause no stain.

It is evident from the authority of the following *s'loka* that those who are exclusively devoted to Bhagavan (whether they be *bhaktas* or *prapannas*) will not fall under the sway of Yama :— "Whatever[10] may be the family into which they are born, wherever they may live, those who love Bhagavan will never go to the world of Yama." There is general agreement also that the same sin will meet with either heavy or light punishment as its consequence, according to the differences of caste, character and the like. This is also consistent with what obtains in the world in cases like the offences committed by princes :—

9-A Bhagavad Gita XVIII — 66.
10. ?

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

In cases of deliberate offence, the punishment is not as severe as before (*prapatti*) nor is there a high degree of grace. To the *prapanna* the punishment is light as in the case of the sons of kings.

Therefore to avoid even this light punishment which would follow as the consequence, a further *prapatti* is ordained. In the case of those who are looked upon as learned and righteous, and who are also capable of atonement, atonement in public, in accordance with their ability, is proper when the offences have been committed in public. This is for the sake of setting an example to the rest of the world. If it were not done, it would be a transgression of (the Lord's) command stated before. The violation of the command is injurious in two ways. When the waiting woman is suspended from service, she loses what she obtains (from the service) such as scents and has to experience also dread (of punishment).

It may (now) be asked:— "What if the original or first *prapatti* is made on one's own initiative (without the sanction of the *s'āstrās*) so as to cover also deliberate sins of the future?" This is (easily) answered by a counter-check:— "What if *bhakti* or *upāsana* is performed so as to cover also future acts of deliberate offence? What if *prapatti* as an *anga* is performed so as to cover such acts?" If it is stated that in these two cases (of counter-check) also, it may be held that future sins will not cling, it will be heresy opposed to what is stated in *Srī Bhashya* and elsewhere. It is also opposed to the code of conduct observed by such (holy men) as Ushasti* who were steadfast in the contemplation of Brahman (*Brahmanishta*). There is no special ordinance to contradict the general statement that when a [11]sin is

* NOTE:—Ushasti ate a morsel of cooked gram given by a *mahout* but refused to drink the water which was afterwards offered by him. He justified his action by saying that he ate the gram to avoid death by starvation, but refused the water because there was then no fear of death.

11. Vishnu Purana: 2-6-40

committed and the man feels remorse, the atonement or the *prāyas'chitta* is to meditate on Bhagavan. Therefore the rule that, unless the occasion has arisen, there can be no application of a remedy (to cover a future possibility) holds good and stands uncontradicted in the case of offences committed deliberately after *prapatti*. Since the *prāyas'chitta* or atonement is prescribed only for a sin that has already been committed, if a man dreads the possiblity of future sins committed deliberately, he should perform atonement in the form of a *prapatti* for the sins of the past life which have now begun to operate and which are the cause of these (possible) future sins. For has it not been said, "*Bhakti*[12] adopted as an *upāya* can destroy all sins except those sins of the past that have begun to operate in this life. On the other hand, *prapatti* (or *sādhya bhakti*) is superior to *bhakti* and can destroy even those sins of the past that have begun to produce their consequences in this life?" It has also been said:— "The [13]sins committed in previous births afflict a man (in the present life) as diseases. They can be got rid of by medicines, charitable gifts, *japa*, offerings to the fire (*homa*) and adoration of Bhagavan". (It is indeed stated here) that, even by *japa* and *homa*, the sins of the past which have begun to bear fruit in the present life can be destroyed. (Such being the case, there is no reason to doubt that *prapatti* can destory such sins). Therefore if a man performs *prapatti* in dread of the possibilities of future sins which might be caused by the sins of the past, these can be got rid of and no such future sin will be deliberately committed.

From such episodes as that of Sandili in which even Garuda who has been described in Alavandar's *Stotram*[13] as Bhagavan's servant, friend, vehicle, seat and device on the banner, committed an offence against the righteous Sandili and had to undergo the evil consequences of it until he obtained pardon from her — from such episodes, it is evident that even for those who are in immediate contact with Bhagavan, even slight offences against the righteous are productive of evil consequences. (It may be asked whether

12. Vigaheswara Samhita 13. Alavandar: Sastra: 4

*nitya sūris* like Garuda could commit offences at all ). The answer is that, if the eternal *sūris* incarnate like Bhagavan, they have to act the part of those who are subject to the sway of *karma* and perform atonement for offences in order to promote the good of the world ( by setting a proper example ).

So, in order that one may not lose the grace of God and thereby incur the need for further *prapatti* or light punishment, a way must be found to root out the possibility of future offences. In general, the root cause of all offences is want of discrimination *(aviveka)*. Of this want of discrimination, the most important is that which causes the delusion that the self is identical with matter ( the body ) which is non-sentient and ever subject to modification and has such other qualities and, likewise, the delusion that the individual self has the attributes and qualities which are peculiar to Iswara, such as existing in itself, independence, and not existing for any one but itself. The sharp-edged saw that cuts off this want of discrimination is a clear knowledge of the nature of one's self which is neither redundant nor inadequate.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

When the cause, namely, the delusion that the self is the body and that the self is independent ( of the Lord ) and other such delusions disappear, the offences which arise from the desire for wealth and for sense pleasures are ( completely ) rooted out without any special effort.

The prime cause of all these, namely, the possibility of future offences and the delusions which cause them is sin committed in past births which has now begun to yield its consequences. Therefore it will be atoned for by the performance of *prapatti* at the beginning so as to cover that sin also or the performance of a further *prapatti* for the purpose. Of these sins which have to be atoned for, the *Bhāshyakāra* ( Sri Ramanuja ) has pointed out that offences done to Bhagavatas stand in the front rank like those

done to the wives of a king — *vide* his commentary on the *Sūtra* :- "The [14]fruits of *mukti* too, cannot be said to be attained at any fixed time; for they can be attained only if there are no obstacles".

( Sri Ramanuja's commentary is as follows : Though the fruit of *upāsana* or *bhakti* is *mukti*, still the time of its attainment is uncertain, because of the presence or absence of obstacles. It may be asked whether there could be any such obstacle in the case of one whose *karma* or *upāsana* which gets him *mukti* is far stronger than all other *karmas*. The answer is :— Even in his case there may be obstacles of the nature of offences done in the past to those who meditate on Brahman ).

Such being the case, although there may be resemblance between oneself and such persons as Parasara, Vyasa, Suka, Sounaka, Nathamuni and others, who were distinguished by their caste, character, conduct and the like in such matters as devotion to Bhagavan and the attainment of the supreme goal of life, they should not be treated with disregard. There are differences due to the will of Bhagavan as seen in the condition of each object among things which are the property of Bhagavan such as cows and cowherds, *tulasī* and *champaka*, cowdung and musk. Such points of excellence and inferiority, which are likely to cause envy, should not make one think of treating superior persons with disregard, as stated in *Rahasyāmnāya* in the section treating of the origin of envy. It is true that particular actions and abstention from such actions have been prescribed in the case of *Bhāgavatās* as due to conditions of caste and the like as stated in the *Brahma Sūtra* ( 2 - 3 - 47 ) " That there is permission and prohibition ( in respect of castes ) is due to their relationship with their bodies as in such things as fire " ( Fire from the house of a Vedic scholar is fit for use, that from the cremation ground is unfit for use. So also, though the soul is pure, a man becomes fit or unfit for certain specific matters owing to his soul's contact with the

14. Brahma Sutra: 3-4-51

body ). In spite of these ordinances, we should also consider such passages as the following :—

"Even[15] a man of bad conduct should be considered a good man if he worships me without expecting any other benefit. He should be treated with respect." "The *chandāla*[16] who has devotion to Bhagavan — to think even by mere chance, of this *chandāla*, to talk to him and to treat him with respect — these purify the man who does so, O, Brahmin". "Whether the[17] devotee of Bhagavan be a *s'ūdra*, a huntsman, or a man who eats dog's flesh, the man who looks upon him as identical with other men of those respective castes will go to hell." "Therefore one should do [18]what one can to please the devotees of Bhagavan. By this, Bhagavan becomes favourably disposed to bless one. There is no doubt about this." So also has it been said (by the Alwar) that those [19]who are the devoted servants of the Lord are his masters in all his future births and that the [20]moment he made up his mind to render service to the Lord's devotees, his past *karma* was destroyed and that he would never think of giving up this service. In the same way it is our duty not to fail in reverence towards the Lord's servants. Even if there is only this mental reverence, it would amount to the *s'esha's* service to the Lord who is perfect and self-sufficient. The thought that "This man is of the Lord" is itself capable of doing good. If there is any deviation from this path, one should tremble in fear as if one has entered into the jaws of Death, as it has been said :— "Whatever[21] is crooked (in conduct) leads to death (*samsāra*): whatever is straight leads to the attainment of Brahman". (When there has been such deviation from right conduct) one should at once beg pardon of these devoted servants of the Lord as

15. Bhagavad Gita: 9–30
16. Itihasa samucchaya: 31–55
17. Itihasa samucchaya: 27–26
18. Itihasa samucchaya: 27–27
19. Tiruvoymozhi: 3–7
20. Tiruvoymozhi: 8–10
21. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 79–21

exemplified in the following:— "Since[22] you have offended, I see no other atonement for you than to be Lakshmana's pardon, with folded hands", and again "If I have[23] offended you in any way, either on account of over-confidence or love, this fault of your servant should be pardoned by you: There is no one who is above committing an offence", and further, "The [24]harsh words that I uttered to you after hearing the speech of Rama who is overwhelmed with grief — these words should be forgiven by you". We should reflect on the manner in which Sugriva, the great king, and Lakshmana apologise to each other in these *s'lokas* and we should get reconciled to the devotees of the Lord (whom we have offended), as if the split that occurred has been glued up without any trace of its being seen.

Even if one who knows the *tattva* has deliberately entered on a course of conduct unfavourable (to the Lord), the Supreme Ruler will pardon him, if he performs *prapatti* subsequently. This may be seen from the following episode:— When Brahma saw Rudra in Badarikasrama aiming his arrow at Bhagavan who had incarnated as the son of Dharma, he explained matters to Rudra and stopped him from the fight. "Rudra[25] then apologised to Narayana who was his Lord to win His favour. He also performed *prapatti* to Hari, the Creator of the World. The Supreme Ruler, the giver of boons, became gracious, controlled His anger, became pleased and associated there with Rudra".

Whether a man has offended Bhagavatas (in this life) or whether some Bhagavatas hate him owing to his wicked deeds in past lives though he has committed no offence in this life, he should obtain the pardon of Bhagavan by obtaining the pardon of such Bhagavatas by some means or other: This is evident in the

22. Ramayana: Kishkindhakanda: 32-17
23. Ibid : 36-11
24. Ibid : 36-28
25. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 352-64

passage which describes the characteristics of a Sri Vaishnava: "He is a [26]devotee of Vishnu who, on hearing harsh words uttered by a Bhagavata, prostrates before him and begs his pardon." If a man does not do so, he will pass beyond the reach of the grace of the Lord and will lose also what is essential to his nature as a *Vishṇubhakta*, namely, his being a *s'esha* to Bhagavatas and, likewise, his qualities of self-restraint and patience; for it has been said:—"Those [27]who are Brahmins (Bhagavatas absorbed in the contemplations of Brahman) they are myself. There is no doubt about this O, King; when they are adored, I am adored; when they are pleased, I am also pleased. He who hates them hates me also" "Though the Brahmin[28] strikes him, curses him and utters cruel words to him, he who does not bow to him as I did (to Bhrigu) — he is a sinner. He will be consumed by the wild fire of the Brahmin's anger. He deserves to be killed and punished. He is not mine." To lose these (his being a *s'esha* to Bhagavatas and his self-restraint and patience) is itself, in his case, being killed and punished. Tondaradippodi Alwar*, who realised and enjoyed his relationship of being a *s'esha* to Bhagavatas, which he considered as his distinctive feature, has described how miserable it is to be outside the pale of the Lord's grace as follows:— "My Lord has not said: "This is a lad[29] deserving of my affection". How wicked are my sins!"

The word *Brahmin* occurring in these *s'lokas* has a special significance, as has been said in the *s'loka*: "He who[30] knows, aright, the truth concerning Bhagavan, who is called Vishnu that measured the world (with His feet) and is also called Vasudeva— he becomes a Brahmin". Even if it is used in its general sense, since the offence to the Brahmin is condemned, much more worthy of condemnation would be the offence to a Bhagavata or devotee of Bhagavan.

26. Lainga purana
27. Vishnu dharma: 52–20
28. Itihasa Samucchaya: 30–100
29. Tirumalai: 37
30. Mahabharata: Anusanika parva: 16 - 2

*NOTE:— That is why he calls himself *Tondaradippodi*, 'The Dust at the Feet of the Devotees'.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS:*

All sins are destroyed, in four equal parts, by repentance, by abstention, by the endeavour to perform atonement and by the completion of the process of atonement. To those who feel remorse and repentance, whether the *prapatti* is performed in a previous *kalpa* or in a later *kalpa*, there is no difference in the *prapatti* to be performed although (there is a difference in the nature of sins committed). Similiarly whether the sins be serious or venial, the performance of a single *prapatti* done at a time will completely destroy at once (all sins).

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Those who dread, at heart, the formidable sins that bear fruit at present and seek refuge at the two lotus-like feet of the Lord who measured the worlds will be freed from all *karma* which flourishes like weeds. In order to prevent the occurrence of future offences, the honey-like grace of our Lord prevails over the want of discrimination (*aviveka*) which gives rise to them.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA.*

The Lord pardons, on account of *prapatti*, all sins committed before *prapatti* except (some among) those which have begun to bear fruit in this life and also those sins which are committed after *prapatti* unintentionally. Likewise He pardons (also) all *prārabdha karma* except the portion of *prārabdha* whose consequences he has agreed to bear. In the case of the *prapanna*, it is not at all likely that sins will be committed subsequently with deliberation. Even if such (subsequent) sins occur, they will be destroyed by atonement; if, on account of wickedness, no atonement is performed, the sins will be expiated by punishment and the Lord will (then) take the *prapanna* to Himself.

## (19) THE CHAPTER ON THE PLACES SUITABLE FOR THE RESIDENCE OF THE PRAPANNA.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

The place where it is possible to concentrate all one's attention on such things as service at the feet of Bhagavan and His adoration, or the place where one can find some one or other whose mind is exclusively and staunchly fixed on Bhagavan — that is the place of abode for *prapannās* as it is almost equal to Vaikunta. Many places that have been prescribed (for abode) by the sages generally have this fitness (in these two respects).

### THE PLACE SUITED TO THE RESIDENCE OF THE PRAPANNA :

As an end in itself, the *prapanna* is desirous and eager to live, the rest of his life in a manner that would be inoffensive and agreeable to the Lord. He is exclusively and supremely attached to the Lord as described in the *s'loka* :— The [1]devotee who is exclusively attached to Bhagavan is not to be described or designated as belonging to a certain village or a certain family, but as belonging to Bhagavan, for Bhagavan alone is everything to him.

### THE PLACES INHABITED BY BHAGAVATĀS ARE THE MOST SUITABLE.

If it be asked what is the proper place for his residence, the answer is as follows :— Holy regions like Aryavarta have now, owing to the nature of the *Yuga* (Kali) become unfit for abode, owing to the rites of *varṇa* and *ās'rama* getting mingled. Therefore the proper place for residence at present is any place where the practice of the *dharma* of the four *varṇas* is well established. Even among these places, those regions which are inhabited by Bhagavatas are to be chosen by (the *prapanna*) desirous of *moksha*. It has been said :— " What [2]austerities must they have

---

1. Vishvaksena Samhita. 2. Perialvar Tirumozhi : 4-4-7

practised (in their past lives) — they who live in places where there are devotees that adore, with folded hands, Sri Krishna, who has a complexion similar to that of a black cloud, and that look upon Him as their protector?" Though it is stated "In Kali, O, [2A]Maitreya, men deluded by heretics will not adore Vishnu, the Lord of the World, the Ruler who created all things", we are also told about places where Bhagavatas live in Kali Yuga: "In Kali [3]Yuga, there will be born, here and there, noble souls who consider that Narayana is the supreme object of attainment. They will be born in numbers in Tamil Nad on the banks of the Tamraparni, of the Kritamala, of the Palar, of the renowned Cauvery and of the river which flows westwards and again:— "Those who [4]drink the waters of these rivers, O, king, become pure in mind and greatly devoted to Bhagavan who is called Vasudeva". As stated in these passages, it is these places inhabited by *Bhāgavatās*, that are suitable for the residence of the *prapanna* in this Kali Yuga. In *Srī Nārāyanīya* the *devas* and the *rishis* said, "When [5]*dharma* stands on a single leg ready to go elsewhere, how are we to live, O Lord? Please tell us this", Bhagavan replied as follows:— "You [6]should live in places where *gurus* of good character and possessed of self-control are held in reverence and where *dharma* has not undergone any deterioration. The places which should be chosen by you, O best of devotees, are those where flourish the Vedas, *yajnas*, austerities (*tapas*), truth, control of the senses and the slaughter of animals only for the sake of *dharma* (sacrifices). *Adharma* will not touch you with its foot".

### *THE HOLY PLACES WHERE BHAGAVĀN IS WORSHIPPED IN TEMPLES ARE SPECIALLY SUITABLE:*

Among them, the holy places where Bhagavan has chosen to be present as *archā* would be proper for the *prapannas*'

2A. Vishnupurana: 6-1-50
3. Bhagavatam: 11-5-38-39
4. Bhagavatam: 11-5-40
5. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 349-85
6. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 349-86-87

residence. He should live permanently in one among them which is suitable for his service (to the Lord). As an example of holy places where *satva* is predominant, Srirangam is indicated in the following passage :— "Until the [7] fall of the body, live in peace here in Srirangam itself." That only the holy places of Bhagavan are suitable for the residence of the wise man has been stated by the great sage (Vyasa) in the context of the places of pilgrimage in *Āranya Parva*, thus :— "The [8]place where the Supreme Being, the God Narayana, who is eternal, dwells — that is sacred; that is most holy; that is the place of the sacred water that purifies; that is the place fit for austerities, that is the place where the divine seers and the *siddhās* and all others perform penance", and (in another context) elsewhere, we find — " There is[9] a mountain called Gomanta, O, king, which is full of all the minerals. On that mountain dwells the lotus-eyed Lord Narayana, the Lord of Lakshmi, who is sung in hymns (there) by those who desire *moksha*." Bhagavan Valmiki also has stated :— "This [10]mountain, Chitrakuta, which resembles Himavan, the king of mountains, is possessed of glory, for Sri Rama born of the race of Kakustha dwells on it like Kubera in Nandana." The word *subhaga* in this *sloka* refers to the glory of that mountain as one to be visited for having been the residence of Bhagavan. In the Satvata Sastras also, the holy places where there are the spontaneous manifestations of Bhagavan, those that were established by *siddhās* and those founded by devotees and the degrees of sanctity attached to them are described separately and it is also stated there that those who dwell within the boundaries of these holy places will attain a special boon at the time of their laying down the body :—"The mind[11] of man which is under the sway of the foul senses is always surrounded by impure influences. It is, however, purified in the last moments by residence in the abode of Narayana."

7. Saranagati Gadya:
8. Mahabharata: Aranya Prava: 88-27-28
9. Mahabharata: Bhishma Parva: 12-8-9
10. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 98-12
11. Satvata Samhita: 7-120

Therefore as stated in the *s'loka* :— "A [12]man should live in a place where there is a temple of Vishnu and do some kind of service (there). If he is unable to perform any service, he should at least abstain from what is forbidden"; the *prapanna* would do well to live in a place sanctified by the presence of Bhagavan and Bhagavatas and capable of promoting *satva guṇa*.

It is true that it is said :— "The place[13] where a man in full control of his senses lives — that place has in it Kurukshetra, Naimisa and, likewise, Pushkaram." But this should be taken to mean that, when a righteous man lives in some insignificant place, because of his inability to live elsewhere, that place becomes sanctified by his residence. This is illustrated in the episode of Sandili.*

Therefore the statement in the following *s'loka* :— "The man [14]who performs *prapatti* by uttering this *mantra* at the very time when he attains this knowledge — that man attains *moksha* wherever he may die losing his consciousness — whether it be in a holy place of pilgrimage or the house of one who eats dog's flesh" — this statement that there is no special place prescribed for death, should also be understood in the light of what has been said above, as pointing out that this will be no hindrance to the attainment of *moksha*.

*TAMIL VERSES :*

(1) The temple or *Vimāna* which is renowned as Srirangam, the temple or *vimāna* which was granted to the rulers of Ayodhya by the lotus-born Brahma, the temple or *vimāna* where the

NOTE :— * Sandili, a great devotee of the Lord, was living on an island in the sea. Garuda, who saw it, wondered why she should dwell in such a mean place. Owing to this offensive thought, his wings were burnt away and he recovered their use only after obtaining her pardon.

12. ?

13. Itihasa Samucchaya: 27-18

14. Varaha Purana :

invincible and incomparable Sri Rama worshipped, the temple or *vimāna* which is the refuge of Vibbishana, the ally of Sri Rama, the temple or *vimāna*, which secures all sorts of benefits unattainable elsewhere, the temple or *vimāna* which has the shape of *praṇava*, the temple or *vimāna* which destroys all sins, however insurmountable they may be—that temple of Srirangam is indeed full of the nectar of grace which never satiates.

(2) The mountain which reveals to us the two feet of Sri Krishna, the mountain where wicked sinners get rid of both their *puṇya* and *pāpa*, the mountain which is renowned as being indeed *moksha* itself, the mountain on which flow holy streams with pellucid waters, the mountain that is extolled as the abode of all righteous actions, the mountain that secures all the enjoyments of *Paramapada* (the region of dazzling gold), the mountain that is longed for by the eternal *sūris* and the people of this earth — that mountain is only the mountain described in the Vedas and famous as the Venkata Hills.

(3) Hastigiri (Kancheepuram) where dwells Sri Rama who, with his might and with his arrow discharged from his beautiful bow in the great battle-field, shook down the bunch of ten heads of the Rakshasa who was powerful in the use of missiles and where dwells also Sri Krishna, the great friend of man, who ate the rising butter kept by Yasoda, after churning the abundant curd into which the churn was pressed — this Hastigiri cuts off the sins of devotees leaving no trace of them behind. It does, of itself, the work of the Lord's *chakra* and lets the latter remain as a mere ornament to His hand :

(4) That place on the earth where dwell (the devotees of the Lord), who long for the world above (*Paramapada*) which is the famous residence of Narayana, the Lord of Lakshmi, born of the lotus full of honey (pollen) — that place is as sacred as the Himalaya surrounded by forests, the Ganga, the Cauvery, the sea, the holy cities (like Ayodhya, Mathura, Kasi and Kanchi) and Sri Vaikunta all in one.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The place which is not to the liking of the minds of those who taste the nectar of the stories of Bhagavan (Vaikunta) — that place does not shine in the world, merely because it is called Kasi, (Kasi: that which shines); it does not become a (suitable) place of residence merely because it is called Ayodhya; it does not save us from our sins merely because it is called Avanti (*Av* = to protect); Kanchi is not excellent because of its name; nor is Madhura considered a seat of excellence merely because it is called Madhura. So also other cities do not become worthy merely because of their names, (if they are not to the liking of those who delight in the ambrosia of stories concerning Bhagavan (Vaikunta).

# (20) THE CHAPTER ON THE DEPARTURE OF THE SELF (FROM THE BODY)

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

The Lord merges the aggregate of the senses in the mind, the mind with the senses in the vital breath (*prāṇa*), the vital breath with these in the self or soul, the self in the subtle elements (*Sūkshma bhūtas*) and the self with these elements in Himself (the Supreme Self) very soon. So far, the process of the soul's departure is common to both the person who has realised Him and the person who has not realised Him. Thereafter, the Lord leads the self through different veins (*nādī*) which lead either to the (dark) path of smoke or to the shining path of light (*archirādi*) or elsewhere in accordance with the qualifications (of each individual).

NOTE :— The soul of the man who has realised Brahman is said to be led through a vein issuing out of the head into the shining path of *archis* along which it passes into immortality in Vaikunta. The soul of the man who has not realised Brahman is led through other veins into the dark path called *dhuma* or smoke. He will be born again in *samsara*.

"Having [1] given up all *upāyas*, and having given up also all desires including the desire to enjoy one's self, I seek as my refuge, O, Lord, Thy feet which measured the world." When with these words, the *prapanna* takes the feet of the Lord, the Lord takes him by the hand, which, it has been said, is the only support of the *prapanna*: "The hand[2] of the Lord who is called Janardana and who has been bought with the price of *bhakti* is the only support for the *prapanna*." The Lord who has been called "the king[2A] of kings of all (beings)" and who is the possessor of the two glories, *Līlā Vibhūti* (in this world) and *Nitya Vibhūti* or eternal glory in *Paramapada*, (having taken him by the hand)

1. Jitanta Stotram:
2. Vishnudharmam: 3–24

2A Mahabharata: Asvamedhika-parva: 43–13

fixes him in a place of His own liking and the *prapanna* leads his life there, being held in as high regard as an anointed queen and following such occupations as are consistent with his exclusive and supreme attachment to the Lord.

### *DELAY IN THE ATTAINMENT OF THE GOAL:*

Among *prapannas*, there may be (some) who, on account of certain specific evil deeds done in past lives which have begun to operate now, may become subject to such lapses as the following.—(1) They may display the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' (*ahankāra* and *mamakāra*) (2) as a result of these (feelings) they may commit offences: (3) they may display a taste or desire for other objects than the Lord; (4) owing to this desire they may contact other deities; (5) they may be weak-minded; owing to this (weak-mindedness), they may desire to adopt other *upāyas*. There may be others who, owing to good deeds done in past lives which have begun to yield their fruits in this life and owing to the specific nature of the request for benefits made at the time of *prapatti*, have never swerved from the service of the Lord. It may be asked what is the nature of the delay in the release from *samsāra* in the case of these two classes of *prapannas*. The answer is as follows :—

(1) In this matter, *prapannas* will never have the feelings of 'I' and 'mine' in any deep-seated form such as the *Chārvākas* (materialists) have. Even people who walk warily sometimes stumble; so also *prapannas* may, on rare occasions, show these feelings; but these improper feelings or notions will disappear by later wisdom originating in reason. (2) In the chapter on the atonement for offences, we explained how, if offences are committed, they will last only until the time of winning pardon or the undergoing of punishment and how the offences will be expiated within the required time.

In the case of those who performed *prapatti* without indicating any definite time (for the attainment of *moksha*), it is said as

follows :— "The man[3] who has performed *prapatti* to me and who has not abstained from sins committed frequently, attains me late after wearing out all his sins."

(3) "Since the *prapanna* is bent on attaining *moksha*, he is not likely to have any long-standing desire for other benefits. Like those who have both *Brahma bhāvana* and *Karma bhāvana*, (Brahma, Rudra and the like), they might entertain a desire for other benefits along with the desire for *moksha* ; if so, Iswara, who is their well-wisher, will not grant them those (so called) benefits (as they are not for his good); for it is said :— "Even when[4] the *bhakta* prays for it, Iswara does not permit him to do what is not good to himself. Does not the mother prevent her child that longs to fall into the fire?" It is said also :— "He whom[5] I want to bless — his wealth I take away from him. His relations will then desert him. He will become miserable. If, in his misery, he still clings to me, I confer on him such blessings as are unattainable even for the *devas*." The same idea is found in the story of *Kundadhāra*. Sometimes Iswara creates in the *prapanna* a distaste for these other things by making him realise that they are trivial, transient and mingled with pain. Sometimes, as in the case of Soubhari and Kuchela, he gives them the benefits desired by them, but makes them feel an aversion to them afterwards.

(NOTE :— Kundadhara : A certain man who was devoutly attached to Kundadhara begged him for wealth. Kundadhara, instead of granting wealth, saw to it that his follower should become attached to *dharma*).

Thus the man who performed *prapatti* indicating the time when he should attain *moksha*, will have acquired an aversion to other benefits than the Lord within the prescribed time. In the case also of the man who did not indicate any such time while performing *prapatti*, there will be delay, as has been stated in the *s'loka*:— "The man [6]who is desirous of performing such *karma* as is a

3. Lakshmi Tantram: 17-102
4. Vishnu Dharmam.
5. Bhagavatam.
6. Lakshmi Tantram: 17-103

means of obtaining other benefits (than God) enjoys pleasures unmingled with pain, and at last acquires a distaste for them (and the spirit of renunciation), after which he reaches the abcde of Bhagavan. In accordance with this, the delay in his attainment (of the supreme goal) will be only until the birth of aversion to worldly objects.

(4) In regard to contact with other deities, the Ruler of All will bring him back some day or other into the company of those who are staunchly and exclusively devoted to Bhagavan, correct his lapse until he gets ashamed and thus remove his deviation from the right path.

If, in some, this contact with other deities becomes permanent, it may be inferred that the adoption of *prapatti* as an *upāya* was incomplete in their case. It may also be understood that they may have such things as Naraka in future. In a man of this description, the fragmentary *prapatti* performed to Bhagavan may, at some time in the future, attain completion and become effective.

(5) In those who performed *prapatti* after the rise of full and great faith, there will not be any weak-mindedness nor the desire to adopt other *upāyas*. If these - *viz.*, weak-mindedness and the desire to adopt other means — are present, it is to be inferred that their former faith was not strong enough. The Lord of All will correct these men also until they acquire great faith and make them perfect *prapannas*.

In the case of those in whom no such lapses occur, there is no possibility at all of delay in the attainment (of the supreme goal). There will be delay for them only as long as they desire it. They will attain *moksha* at the time when they desire to have it. The *Adhikārī* who has attained the true state of a *prapanna* will always be the favourite of the Supreme Ruler, who is the Lord of Lakshmi, as pointed out in the passage. "O, [7]Thou, Lord of

7. Tirumalai: 38

Srirangam, that delightest in those idle* men (*prapannas*) who stand outer-most (as being incapable of *karma yoga*, *jnāna yoga* or *bhakti yoga*)".

In the case of this *prapanna*, the Lord who is the unconditional *s'eshī* of all, who is independent of all others and without limitations of any kind and whose will is irresistible, withholds his desire to punish, which is the cause of all fears, at the very first moment in which he utters the sentence expressing *prapatti*, in the same way as at the beginning of the meditation in the case of the *upāsaka* or *bhakti yoga nishta*, who has adopted *prapatti* as a means to *bhakti*, of whom it is said :— "When the [8]*vidyā* commences, the destruction of former sins and the absence of contact with subsequent sins (occur), for so the *s'rutis* say". The Lord makes up His mind (at that very instant) to bring him and those who are his followers into the company of the eternal *sūris* and, not satisfied with having done only this, He devours, as it were, all the heaps of sins committed by those who have sought Him and does not reveal any trace of them outside and feels also that He should stomach even more (of these sins). He removes the sins of his followers too, even when they are committed deliberately, by His will to grant the *prapanna* His blessing. In virtue of this, they will expiate their sins by repentance and the like. It is said : "He ([9]the Lord) hastens to give *Paramapada* to the man who is fit for *mukti*". The Lord pities the *prapanna* for the delay which he has chosen and hastens to create in him an impatience of delay (in attainment). He produces in him an eagerness to attain the goal as illustrated in the following (verses) :— "[10]Hereafter I do not want to be born in this world of ignorance" and "Do [11]not deceive me as Thou didst before. I swear by Thee and by Thy

NOTE :— * They are called 'idle', because, after *prapatti* they do not seek any other *upaya*. They are said to stand "outer-most", because, being unable to adopt *karma yoga*, *jnana yoga* and *bhakti yoga*, they have adopted the *upaya* (*prapatti*) which is prescribed in the *Charama sloka* of the *Gita*.

8. Brahma Sutras: 4–1–13
9. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–6–3
10. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–6–1
11. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–10–2

queen whose beautiful locks of hair shed their fragrance like a garland on Thy chest—I swear that I must be taken to *Paramapada*" Having made him so eager and so impatient to obtain the goal, the Lord decides on giving him *Paramapada* as desired by him at the end of this life, which has come to him as a result of past *karma*: So has it been said .— "Our Lord[12] is the greatest benefactor that confers Vaikunta on those who have performed *prapatti*, when they happen to die". The Lord* has already seen to it that the fetters of gold and iron which bind him to *samsāra* namely, his *pāpa* and *puṇya*, past and future, as also the *karma* which has begun to operate, except that portion of it which he has agreed to expiate (during this life) are cut off without any trace being left at all. It is said :— "The sins[13] of the past and the sins committed after *prapatti* vanish like cotton thrown in the fire" So when the time for leaving the body has come, the Lord causes his meritorious deeds (*puṇya*) and his sins (*pāpa*) to be divided and distributed among others, namely, those who were his well-wishers and those who did evil to him, respectively, as the consequence of the good and the evil wrought to him by them. For it has been said :— "The man [14]who is about to attain *mukti* leaves his *puṇya* and *pāpa* to his friends and foes respectively and attains Brahman as the fruit of *bhakti yoga*". and again "The sins [15]which are notorious in this world and which, oppressive like Yama, make a man sink into *samsāra* left the man about to attain *mukti* without making the least noise and entered into plants (*viz* his foes)". The authors of the *Smritis* have expressed the truth contained in the Upanishads in the manner stated above :

### *THE PRAPANNA MAY DIE AT ANY TIME, DAY OR NIGHT, IN THE BRIGHT OR IN THE DARK HALF OF THE MONTH : ETC.*

In regard to those who are desirous of other benefits than *moksha* and who have not fulfilled completely the means of attain-

* NOTE:— Even *punya karma* which would lead to *swarga* is a fetter (though of gold), because it stands in the way of *moksha*.

12. Tiruvoymozhi: 9–10–5
13. Tiruppavai: 5
14. Manu Smriti: 6–79
15. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 5–4–3

ing *moksha*, it has been said in the *Smriti*, and in the science of the celestial bodies, in the context of the departure from the body that [16] "Day-time, the bright half of the month (*S'ukla paksha*) and the *Uttarāyaṇa* are favourable times for those that die". But (as the *prapanna* has adopted successfully the proper *upāya*) there is no such rule for him in regard to the time of death. For it has been said about him :— "It is not right[17] to say that the man who dies at night will not attain *moksha*, for the association with *karma* lasts only as long as the body lasts", and again "For the same reason, the view[18] is not right that the man who dies in *dakshiṇāyana* will not attain *moksha*." Whether in the day of man or in the night of man, whether in the day of *pitris* (*s'ukla-paksha*) or in the night of the *pitris* (*krishṇapaksha*), whether in the day of the gods (*uttarāyaṇa*) or in the night of the gods (*dakshiṇāyana*) — at the time appointed by the Lord, He makes him remember all his previous thoughts and desires (for *moksha*) and like a king who is gracious and who cuts off the fetters of the prince lying in the prison-house, the Lord takes him along with Him. He causes some occasion or other suited to the time, for the soul's parting from the body without regard to auspicious or inauspicious time.

### *THE PROCESS OF THE SELF LEAVING THE BODY:*

Then the Lord makes the ten external senses like speech merge in the mind and the mind with the senses of action and of knowledge, which are thus eleven in number, merge in the vital breath (*prāṇa*) and the vital breath in the self. Then at the moment of the shaking of the bone in the back called *vams'a*, the Lord churns out the subtle elements from the gross body (*sthūla deha*) and contacts the self with the subtle elements (*sūkshma bhūta*) and then comforts the self so mingled with the senses, the vital breath and the subtle elements by keeping it by the side of Himself in the form that He has assumed in the heart; for, by

16. Mahabharatha - Anusanika Parva: 242-31
17. Brahma sutras : 4-2-18.
18. Brahma sutras : 4-2-19.

nature, He is its friend and well-wisher. After giving the self rest and relaxation, the Lord sees that the self passes out of the body. So far, the process is the same both for the man who has realised Brahman and for the man who has not.

*THE PATH OF THE JOURNEY AFTER DEPARTURE:*

(In regard to this passage of the self from the body), it has been said as follows :— "The *Jiva* who[19] abides in the heart like a lamp has innumerable veins (*nādī*). They are of many colours:— white, black, violet, blue, golden yellow, yellow and red. Among these veins (*nādīs*), which are of varied colours, there is one which proceeds upwards. The individual self (*Jīva*) who passes through this vein breaks through the sphere of the sun and, having passed beyond the world of Brahma, reaches the highest state. One hundred other *nādīs* also go upwards. The *Jīva* who goes out through them attains the bodies of the *devas* and reaches their worlds. Some *nādīs* of various colours go downwards and they are dim. The *Jīva* who goes out through them is born in *samsāra* in this world, without any choice on his part, in order to experience the fruits of his *karma*. (Since the *nādīs* are like rays proceeding from the heart which is like a lamp, they are called rays (*rasmis*).

The Lord sees to it that the self of the *prapanna* does not go out through any of these *nādīs* which lead those that are thieves of themselves, ((i. e.) who do not realise that they belong to the lord) to *svarga* and *naraka* (hell) and are therefore like the routes along which thieves take their victims. He makes the *prapanna's* self enter the *Brahma Nādī*, which is beyond the hundredth among those *nādīs* that go upwards and which leads to the shining path called *archirādi*, and helps it to start with the support of the rays of the sun.

When Koorathalvan (Sri Vatsankamisra) was in his last moments, his tongue was parched with the fatigue (of the moment) and (unable to speak or utter any words) he caught

19. Yagnyavalkya Smriti: 4–166–169

hold of Sri Ramanuja's feet. At that time Sri Ramanuja whispered the *Dvaya Mantra* in his ear. The other disciples, who were there, said to themselves with mental depression :— "How can we hope to get this blessing (*Dvaya* being whispered in the ear by Sri Ramanuja)? What shall we do?" Sri Ramanuja understood their fears and said, "Do you not know the true character of Alvan? When he is in this condition (unable to say anything owing to the parched throat), what I did was only like placing a little camphor and a piece of sugar-candy (in his mouth, to make it wet). I did not whisper the *Dvaya* in order to make the *upāya* complete with its accessories". The disciples were relieved on hearing this.

NOTE :— The idea is that the *prapanna* will attain *moksha,* even if he is unconscious and unable to utter the *Dvaya* or other *mantras.*

Therefore as has been said in the following two *s'lokas :*— " The man who has performed *prapatti*, whether he dies in a holy place or in the house of one who eats dog's flesh, will attain *moksha* even if he dies unconscious," and, "The [20]man who, when his mind is in its normal condition, when the body is not shattered, and when the elementary constituents of the body (*dhātu*) are in perfect equipoise, meditates on me who have the world as my body and who am not subject to births due to *karma* — when that man lies like a log of wood or a piece of stone in his dying moments, I think of (him) my devotee and lead him to attain the highest state", and as has been stated also in the Tamil verses .— "O, Lord [21]that reposest on Adi Sesha in Srirangam, a man seeks refuge under the strong in order that he may obtain their support when he is in distress; though I am not like Thy devotees who know how to seek Thy help, yet I approach Thee, since Thou wert gracious even to the elephant; when the langour of the dying moment has come, I may not be able to think of Thee. Therefore I entreat Thee, even now, that, at that time, Thou shouldst come to my rescue," — as has been said in these passages, the *prapanna*

20. Varaha Charama Sloka :
21. Perialvar Tirumozhi : 4-10-1

need not seek the remembrance (of God) in his last moments (by any effort of his own).

*THE LAST THOUGHT:*

The statement:— "At [22]the time of casting the body away, you will be in full possession of your intelligence owing to my grace; you will have a vision of me and will have all your previous memories and desires (for *moksha*)" — this statement, too, has to be interpreted in a manner that would not be in conflict with the verses cited above This is how it should be interpreted. Some *āchāryas* interpret as follows:— "The statement made in (*S'aranāgati Gadya*) applies to those *prapannas* who, while performing *prapatti*, begged also for the remembrance (of the Lord) in their last moments." This interpretation cannot be accepted for the following reason:—There must be some last thought or other at the time of casting off the body and this thought must have some object or other. If the object that is thought of were other than the Lord, it would become dangerous, for it has been said:— "Whatever[23] object one thinks of at the time when one leaves one's body — that alone will one attain (after death)". So (we have to conclude that) if the man has performed *prapatti* as an independent means (whether or not he begged for the remembrance (of the Lord) in his last moments while performing *prapatti*,) he will get that remembrance as stated in the *Gadya*. This is the interpretation favoured by some *āchāryas*. In the verses from Sanskrit and Tamil quoted above (where the last remembrance is not declared to be necessary), what is meant is that the last remembrance is not prescribed for the *prapanna* as something to be effected by his own effort as an *upāya*. In the eighth chapter of the *Gītā*, and in the *s'loka* which says:—"That[24] Bhagavan whom the *yogis* keep in their minds by an effort at the time of leaving the body-keeping that Bhagavan in mind, Bhishma gave up his body. Was he not one who attained the fruit of his *bhakti* or *upāsana*?" (The last remembrance comes as

22. Saranagati Gadya:
23. Bhagavad Gita: 8-6
24. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 46-143

an *upāya* for those who adopt *bhakti* as the means and it comes by their own effort); but in the case of the *prapanna*, the remembrance comes out of the Lord's grace alone. " *Kevalam madīya dayayā* " are Sri Ramanuja's words. What does this 'last remembrance' mean? When speech and other activities have become impossible, the remembrance or thought which arises in the mind before the mind, too, ceases to function–this is the last remembrance. Those who stand by cannot know it. Sri Ramanuja's commentary on the *Brahma Sūtra*: "It is seen [25] that the mind functions even after the senses have ceased to do so", means only this, that the mind's functioning may be inferred by some sign or other. It may also describe his own experience in some states of ill-health and the like. Therefore this last remembrance is a thing that could be known only to the man who becomes a *mukta* and to (the Lord) who gives him *moksha*.

After this, the self, whether it be of the *yogī* or of one who is not a *yogī*, takes repose by the side of the Supreme Being who is in his heart (Harda) and is in a state similar to that of dreamless sleep (*sushupti*).

It may be asked whether the description contained in the *s'lokās* and Tamil verses quoted above (Nos. 20 and 21)—such as being like a log of wood or like a piece of stone, and loss of all remembrance or consciousness may not be a reference to this state of *sushupti*. The answer is that if so, there would be no special consideration for the *prapanna* (which certainly there is).

Thereafter (*i.e.* after repose by the side of the Supreme Being), the self or soul attains perfect knowledge being awakened by the Lord (who is wise) and who says that "the Jiva gets knowledge,[26] memory and forgetfulness only from Him." Lighted by that knowledge, it enters into the *Brahma Nādī*. Thence - forward Time is one eternal day for the self.

25. Commentary on Brahma Sutra: 4–2–1
26. Bhagavad Gita 15–15

*TAMIL VERSE:*

To the *prapanna* (who is a devotee of Sri Ranganatha) who departs from the body which is as transient as lightning and who is to journey from the central Brahma nadi, along the beautiful and shining path (of *archiradi*), which is free from (all) impediments, the place of his departure is itself an auspicious place, the day of his departure is itself an auspicious day, the omens and signs that are then seen are all auspicious, whatever they may be.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

Like a father who descends into a well full of slushy mire to take out his son that has fallen into it, the Lord, (in His *līlā*), abides *in the cave of the heart* (*dahara*) and at the time of our leaving the body, He helps us to enter the *nādī* which is beyond the hundredth, so that we may start on our journey to the city that was not built by any one.

## (21) THE CHAPTER ON THE PRESCRIBED PATH OR ROUTE.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

Fire (*archis*), day-time, the bright half of the month *s'ukla-paksha*), *Uttarāyaṇa* and the year, thence Vayu, Surya, Chandra and then Lightning, Varuna, Indra, Prajapati or Brahma — having traversed this path in the order given above, the self crosses the river Viraja; then follows the wonder that defies (all description in words.

*THE ROUTE CALLED ARCHIRĀDI:*

Thus the Lord who lives in the heart and who is full of love (for the *Jīva*) starts with the self who desires *mukti* and who has entered into the *nādī* in the head from out of Brahmapuri, namely, the gross body, by the *Brahma Nādī*, which is, as it were, the main gate (of that city). In this He resembles a king who walks to and fro with his charming child in his arms.

As has been said in the following verses :— "The self[1] passes through a beautiful opening in the centre of the sphere of the sun." "The [2]self makes an opening in the sphere of the sun, whose rays fill his chariot". "He goes [3]through the middle of the sphere of the fiery sun", "The Lord[4] helps him to climb up by a ladder to *Vaikunta* through the sphere of the sun whose hot rays dispel the darkness and then removes the ladder," — (as described in these verses), the Lord sets the self on the path called *devayāna* and leads him Himself with the following to guide him, namely, *archis* or fire, day, the bright half of the month, *Uttarāyaṇa* and the year, Vayu, Surya and Chandra and Lightning: with Lightning who is called also *amānava* and his companions, Varuna, Indra and Prajapati, the self is helped on its way. As the Alvar

---

1. Peria Tirumadal: 16
2. Siria Tirumadal: 7
3. Tirumazhisai Alvar: Tiruchandaviruttam: 67
4. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4-9-3.

says :— "With these guides who are immortal, he reaches Vaikunta and casts off this beautiful prison house of *samsāra*."

NOTE :— Fire, Day, Suklapaksha, Uttarayana and the year are, of course, inanimate; but the deities presiding over them (*abhimani devatas*) are the guides here referred to.)

*ENTERTAINMENT ON THE WAY:*

The Lord has said, "I [6]remember my devotee and lead him to the supreme goal." In every one of these regions on the way (which belong respectively to Surya, Chandra *etc.*), the self enjoys all those delights which are described at great length in the *s'āstrās* of Bhagavan (*Āgamās*). Thereafter it arrives at a region which it has long been eager to see and which has been described as follows :— "When [7]shall I see with my own eyes the world called Vaikunta? It shines brilliantly, it is always with Bhagavan who is possessed of the six attributes, like *jnāna*; it can never be attained by those who are not devoted to Vishnu; it is free from the three qualities of *prakriti* or matter (*sattvam, rajas* and *tamas*). It is full of the eternal *sūris* who divide the day into five parts and render the service to the Lord appropriate to each; it is also full of released souls who are like the eternal *sūris* It has presence chambers, halls, and mansions It is beautiful with forests and gardens, it has broad and deep wells, lakes and groves which adorn it. It is free from the sufferings due to *prakriti*; it is fit to be praised by the *devās* It shines like ten thousand suns shining at once; it is constituted of pure *sattvam* unmingled with *rajas* and *tamas*."

As soon as the self arrives at this region, it casts off the subtle body (*sūkshma s'arīra*) which was kept on merely for the sake of the journey and not for experiencing the fruits of past *karma*: it casts off this subtle body like a boat which is set adrift after the crossing of the river and when the self has crossed the

5. Tiruvoymozhi: 1-3-11.
6. Varaha Charama Sloka
7. Jitanta Stotram: 2-18-20

river Viraja, the Lord endows the self with a body that is super-sensuous and not constituted of matter or *prakriti*; it is helped to reach the lake called *Airammadīyam* and then to approach the *asvattha* tree called *Somasavana* and is then welcomed by five hundred celestial damsels (*apsaras*) with garlands, ointments, fragrant powders, raiments and ornaments. The self is then decked by them with adornments suited to Brahman and the fragrances, flavours and splendours of Brahman are made to enter into it. It is then received by the eternal *sūris*. As the Alwar says. "The eternal [8] *sūris* with crowns on their heads come in groups to receive these self's or souls who are esteemed as the servants of Govinda in successive generations. They take the self to the tower with high walls which is adorned with banners. The self is then led to the entrance where the gates are kept by guards called Indra and Prajapati and receives super-sensuous (*aprākrita*) honours befitting a king. This is described in the three verses beginning with 10-9-9:—"As [9] soon as they (the *muktas*) arrive at the gate, the guards who are eternal *sūris* say:—"The devotees of Bhagavan are our masters. So please enter our abode". "The *sūris*, who were there, wondered at the blessing vouchsafed to these released souls arriving from the earth. They considered it their own good fortune that these souls entered Vaikunta and washed their feet and beautiful women received them with treasures, fragrant powder, the *pūrṇakumbha* and the lamp. Then these souls lived (for ever with the eternal *sūris* enjoying endless delights."

Thereafter the self is led into the enchanting assembly in the hall (*mantapa*) set with gems. As has been said in these *ślokas*: "I do[10] not know how long I have spent my time in vain with this *prakriti* being subject to her sway. How can I remain associated with this *prakriti*, which takes the excellent forms (or bodies of the *devās*), the middling forms (or bodies of men) and the mean

8. Tiruvoymozhi: 10-9-8.

9. Tiruvoymozhi: 10-9- (9-10-11)

10. Mahabharatha: Santi Parva: 312-(30-38-39)

forms (or bodies which experience the pains of hell)? I will depart from her and give up all contact with her and attain Bhagavan who is free from all blemish. I will become one with Him and I will not be one with this non - sentient *prakriti*. It is in the fitness of things that I should be one with Him and not with this *prakriti*", and "When shall [11]I see, with my eyes, Kesava who is black as a cloud, whose eyes are broad and who is playing with Lakshmi in the gardens? and "When shall [12]we all see Sri Rama with his complexion black as a cloud and with his long arms, — Rama who is firmly set in *sattva*, who has taken a staunch vow to protect those that seek his help and who is bent on relieving the sorrows of the world? Just as the rising sun dispels the darkness of the whole world, Sri Rama will dispel all our sorrow the moment we see him" — as stated in these *slokas*, the Lord reveals to the *mukta* His blissful form so that he may get rid of all his sorrows, enables him to acquire his essential nature (with the *eight great qualities), takes him to His feet and by *sāyujya* with Himself — which means equal enjoyment — places him in the midst of His eternal servants (*nitya sūris*) who enjoy eternal bliss and who (henceforth) are of the same class as he.

Then the Lord blesses him with the grant of all such services as were desired by him and as are agreeable to Himself, having previously removed all hindrances and enabled him to attain, his essential nature, in a manifest form, and without any limitations of place, time and circumstance, so that these services may last as long as his soul lasts. The Lord embraces the *mukta* who has arrived just now and treats him, without the slightest difference, in the same manner as He treats the *sūris*, who are eternally free from all imperfections and who are like friends of the same age among themselves and with the Lord The Lord is immensely delighted at the bliss enjoyed by this eternal servant of His who is

*NOTE:— *The eight qualities* — freedom from sin, being without old age, without death, without sorrow, without hunger, without thirst, with all desired objects and with a will that meets with no hindrance.

11. Jitanta Stotram: 2-21

12. Ramayana: Ayodhya Kanda: 83-(8-9)

staunchly and exclusively devoted to Him, and who has attained the exalted position desired by Alavandai in his *Stotram and by Sri Ramanuja in his *Vaikuntagadyam.*

* NOTE :— In the *Stotram* and the *Gadyam* Sri Alavandar and Sri Ramanuja cry out, as it were, saying :— When shall I go to Vaikunta and see the Lord face to face and be His devoted and eternal servant?

*ARCHIRĀDI IS NOT THE ONLY ROUTE TO MOKSHA OR VAIKUNTA. THERE ARE OTHER ROUTES AS WELL.*

As in the case of such meditations as *Madhu Vidyā* which are the means of attaining *moksha* after obtaining positions like those of the *Vasūs,* "The pure[14] quality of *sattva* makes the self attain Narayana who is of the form of Aniruddha. The Lord who is of the pure nature of Aniruddha leads him himself to the Supreme Vasudeva (*Para Vāsudeva*)." And again·— "Know, [15] O best of Brahmins, that this is the truth. Those who have become free from *puṇya* and *pāpa,* who are devoid of *karma* which is like fuel kindling the fire of *samsāra* and who walk along the route to the world of Vishnu - to them the sun who dispels the darkness of all the world is said to be the doorway." "This world is sustained by the sun. With their material body burnt up by the sun, they become invisible as they have no bodies and are of the nature of the soul which is atomic in size. They then enter the god Aniruddha. Having remained in the body of Aniruddha (for some time) and leaving it, they reach Pradyumna remaining now as only mind. Leaving Pradyumna, they enter into Sankarshana who is the deity presiding over *Jīvas* (*abhimāni devatā*). Along with them proceed those who have performed *Jnāna Yoga* and *Karma yoga.* Having become free from the three qualities (*sattvam, rajas* and *tamas* ), they enter into the Supreme Being who is the abode of all, who resides within the Self and who is free from all imperfections. Know that Vasudeva is the abode of all ( *vāsa* ) and that He is, in truth, immanent as *antaryāmī* in all. Those who have

13. Srigunaratnakosa : 27
14. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 307-77
15. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 354 – (13–20)

subjected themselves to spiritual disciplines, who have perfect control over their senses and who have attained peace of mind enter into Vasudeva, considering Him as the only object of attainment."

(As in the case of *Madhu Vidyā*) and in these passages cited from the *Mahābhārata*, it has also been stated that there is another route for *muktas* :— "They go [16] from here to *S'vetadvīpa*, and reach Hari who has the Universe as His form. Then they reach Hari in the form of Aniruddha who is in the ocean of milk. From there they go to Pradyumna, who is the Lord of Brahma and of all others. Thence they proceed to Sankarshana, the eternal Bhagavan. To those who want to have, for ever, the bliss of Brahman, who have attained success in being staunchly and exclusively devoted to Bhagavan and who perform the worship of the Lord in the five different periods of the day — to them this is another path (leading to *moksha*). In the section (devoted to Pancharatra in Sri Bhashya, it is said also that "those [17] who attain *mukti* give up the worship of the incarnational form (*Vibhava*), proceed thence to the worship of the *Vyūha* and finally after the worship of the *Vyūha*, attain the Supreme Being called Vasudeva." These refer to particular classes of those who attain *mukti*. Similarly certain specified routes are laid down for those who attain *mukti* after remaining for a while in the Satyaloka, the world of Brahma. These also apply to special cases such as *krama mukti* (release by gradation). It is not our object to describe these differences in the routes to *mukti*, which are diverse for diverse souls, as their knowledge is prescribed only to the respective *adhikārīs*.

## *THE MEDITATION ON THE ROUTE - HOW USEFUL TO THE PRAPANNA*

To the man who has adopted *bhakti* or *upāsana* as his *upāya*, the meditation on the path to *mukti* has been prescribed as an *anga* to be performed daily. But to the man who has adopted

16. Jayat Samhita: 17. Sri Bhashya: 2-2-41

*prapatti* as the means, there is no such need. Still, at the time of adopting this *upāya*, since he should know what his goal is in order that he may be competent to adopt the *upāya*, the meditation may help to remember the supreme goal. It becomes an end in itself, as it produces a keen delight in knowing that, very soon, the supreme goal begged for at the time of *prapatti* will be attained. In this respect it is like counting the days before the ensuing wedding. The *prapanna* will attain the desired object even by a cursory knowledge (of the path) (though the details are not known to him.)

Of this meditation on the path to *mukti*, the state of Sita is an example (of whom it is said):—"It looked [18] as if Sita was driving in the chariot of her mind drawn by her desires which were like fleet horses, towards Sri Rama, the greatest of kings, who was aware of his nature that always insisted on protecting those that sought his help".

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Agni, Daytime, *S'uklapaksha*, *Uttarāyaṇa*, the year, the intervening Vayu, Surya, Chandra, Lightning, Varuna, the king of the *devas*, (Indra) with his umbrella (signifying rulership) and Prajapati — by these the soul of the *mukta* is entertained on the way with delights and thereafter it enters the abode of bliss.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

We become exhausted by frequent ascent (to *svarga*) and descent back to the earth along the path of the *Pitris* (the path of smoke) like the water-pot going up and down the well by the rotation of the water-wheel. (We become exhausted likewise) by incessant journey, to and fro, along the route to hell (So) Hari makes the various deities (on the shining path of *archis*) entertain us who are so exhausted and at length confers bliss on us by keeping us, as it were, under His shade which is (like the shade of a sandal tree).

18. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 19 - 7.

## (22) THE CHAPTER ON THE FULL AND PERFECT ENJOYMENT OF THE BLISS OF BRAHMAN.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

Led by his guides (*archis* and others) to the Lord of Lakshmi who is possessed of varied glories in the region beyond *tamas* (*i e*) *prakriti* and having attained Him, the *mukta* has his essential nature in full manifestation and realises his inseparable connection with the Lord and as a consequence, acquires the *eight attributes (of freedom from sin and the like) and without any question of his returning again (to *samsāra*), he attains, in regard to enjoyment, perfect resemblance to the Lord.

### *THE NATURE OF THE BLISS OF BRAHMAN:*

If it is asked what is this full and perfect enjoyment of Brahman by the *mukta* who has traversed the path (described before), the answer is as follows:— He will in all places, at all times, and in all situations, have, for his unsurpassed joys, the supreme Ruler with His countless forms, attributes, glories and activities without missing any of them. This is thus described (in the following verse).— "She [1]will never, in the least, miss (the sight of) Bhagavan whose eyes are as beautiful as the lotus and who is the Lord of the world." (Since the Lord enjoys His own forms, attributes, glories and activities Himself), there is perfect similarity between the *mukta's* enjoyment and the Lord's. Therefore (the *srutis*) speak of perfect similarity.

The Lord's *svarūpa* is delightful as may be seen from the following passages:— "He is[2] all knowledge and all bliss". "The [3]attainment of Bhagavan is a remedy for the disease of (*samsāra*). It is of the nature of joy which is unsurpassed and confers joy on others. It is an end in itself and lasts for ever". Other things are

*NOTE:— Eight attributes:— (See page 211).

1. Tiruvoymozhi: 6 - 7 - 10
2. Tiruvoymozhi: 1-1-2
3. Vishnupuranam: 6-5-59

enjoyable in this way:— If the king is the queen's joy, then all objects and instruments of his enjoyment as well as the places where he finds delight are alike objects of joy to her. Similarly the *mukta* finds joy in all that pertains to the Lord. That the Supreme Ruler who has all forms, attributes and the like is an object of enjoyment is evident from the *s'rutis* and the *smritis*. This idea has been expressed in the section on *Bhūmā* in the *Brahma Sūtras*. The *svarūpa* of Bhagavan is called *Paramapada*, because it is the ultimate and supreme object of attainment being of unsurpassed agreeableness. Since the perfect enjoyment of the *svarūpa* of Bhagavan happens only after reaching a most delightful region far superior to all others, that region is also called *Paramapada*. The essential nature or *svarūpa* of the *Jīva*, which is the recipient of this joy in the attainment of Bhagavan which is also among the glorious possessions (*Vibhūtis*) of the Lord and which has, for its attributes, *jnāna* and *ānanda*, is also (sometimes) called *Paramapada*. Along with the others, these three have, in common, only the feature of being the object of attainment.

It has been said above that such things as Bhagavan's *svarūpa*, attributes and forms, the region of eternal glory (*nitya vibhūti*) which is constituted of pure *sattvam* and his own *svarūpa* are objects of delight to the *mukta*. It may be asked, "This may be true. But by sense perception (*pratyaksha*) and other sources of knowledge, the objects in this world of *līlā vibhūti* are found to be disagreeable and are declared by the *s'āstras* also to be things to be given up. How then could they *viz*. the objects in *līlā vibhūti* be objects of delight to the *mukta*?" The answer is as follows:— "There is nothing inconceivable in this. What appears disagreeable to the man suffering from (excess of) bile is felt as agreeable when the bile has decreased Again when the prince is in the prison house it is disagreeable. But when the emperor is pleased to set him free and to place him by his own side to enjoy like pleasures, the prison house may appear agreeable as a symbol of

his father's glory, although it has not undergone any change. It is said in the *Rāmāyana* :—"To be with[4] you is *moksha* for me; to be without you is hell to me:" again, "To me [5]living without Sri Rama, the great warrior, in the midst of these Rakshasis, of what use is life, or wealth, or ornaments?" In *Tiruvoymozhi* 4-8 it is said :—"As the Lord does [6]not care for me, it would not at all matter if I lost all that I would otherwise prize highly, *viz*., my beauty, my mind, my modesty, the sheen of my complexion, my intelligence, my charm, my bracelets, my girdle, my body and my very life." As illustrated in the passages cited above, the objects of this world (*Lilā Vibhūti*), which appear disagreeable or only slightly agreeable, when the *jīva* is not blessed with union with the Lord, may appear supremely agreeable, when he has become a *mukta* enjoying without intermission (the bliss of) Bhagavan. There is nothing inconsistent in this. The same object may be disagreeable or only slightly agreeable to a man bound to *samsāra*, while to one released from the bondage of *karma*, it is agreeable. This is the nature ordained for them by the will of God.

That Bhagavan, the Lord of Sri, who has, for his *prakāra* or *mode*, all things whose agreeableness is dependent on His will, is the goal of attainment is implicit in the words in the dative or fourth case (*Nārāyaṇāya*) in *Tirumantra* and in *Dvaya*. The service referred to before is the overflow of love born of the perfect enjoyment of Brahman and the Bhashyakara has explained it in several places in the (*S'araṇāgati Gadya*).

### *FULL AND PERFECT ENJOYMENT OF BHAGAVAN OVERFLOWS INTO KAINKARYA OR SERVICE.*

(It is said in the *s'rutis* that the *mukta* eats whatever he wants and can create whichever relations he wants). The enjoyment of food in the state of *mukti* and the contact with relations and the like are not due to *karma*, whether *puṇya* or *pāpa*, but

4. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 30-18 6. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-8-(1-10)
5. Ramayana: Suudarakanda: 26-5

are dependent only on the will of the *mukta* which is (always) in accordance with the will of Bhagavan. Therefore they are not the consequences or fruits of *karma*, but fall into the category of pure service which is the overflow of the perfect enjoyment of Brahman. Thus the ultimate goal of attainment is the full and perfect enjoyment of Brahman which extends also to those services that are desired by the *mukta*. When this experience has once been attained, it never afterwards ceases and this my be seen from the following passages :—

" The [7]place from which the man who has meditated on Brahman never returns - that place is attained by him (the *prapanna*)"; again, "Those[8] great souls who have attained the highest reach me and are never afterwards born in *samsāra*, which is the abode of suffering and is ever-changing. All the worlds including that of Brahma are places, O Arjuna, from which souls return to *samsāra*. But the soul that has attained me, is, O Son of Kunti, never born again.", and further "When the man[9] who has become dissociated from all contact with *prakriti* has seen Brahman who is the 26th real, he will never be born again, because he has attained all that has to be attained.", and also "The [9A]heavenly bodies like the moon and the sun (the presiding deities that govern them) are born again in *samsāra* (after reaching their high positions). But those who meditate on Bhagavan with the *mantra** of twelve syllables never come back to *samsāra*.

*NOTE:— *Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya:* with *Om* (or *aum*) preceding it.

(The same idea is evident also) in: "If a man[10] utters the words *Namo Nārāyaṇa* with hands folded over the head (*i.e.* performs *prapatti*) and then goes (by the shining path), he will not be allowed to return to the world of *samsāra*, even if he furnishes security for his return to *Vaikunta*" and in other passages like this.

7. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-26
8. Bhagavad Gita: 8-(15-16)
9. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 323-81
9A. Vishnupurana: 1-6-40
10. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4-5-2

Even if they come to *līlā vibhūti* (this world of ours) by their own will and pleasure which are of the form of service to the Lord, there will be no diminution of their enjoyment of Brahman and in this sense there will be no return to *samsāra*.

As regards these souls that attain this endless enjoyment of Brahman, it is not possible to say whether their last body is that of a *deva*, a man or other creatures. Even such beings as Brahma have to attain *moksha*. So also the great sages say:— "Even[11] [11]such others as the virtuous hunter who follow gruesome professions attain the goal owing to their practice of *bhakti yoga* in their previous birth, as may be seen from the instance of *S'ramanī*"

### *THERE ARE NO DEGREES OF BLISS AMONG THE MUKTAS*:

The followers of Anandatirtha take into account the superiority or inferiority of *Jīvas* in the state of the quest for *mukti* and maintain that, in accordance with these degrees of merit or demerit (while in the state of seeking *mukti*), there would be differences in enjoyment even after they have attained *mukti*. They have forgotten the passages in such authorities as the *s'ruti* which speak of perfect equality with the Supreme Being in regard to enjoyment (after release from bondage).

Some hold that, in accordance with defects in the observance of the prescribed code of conduct by the seeker after *mukti*, there would be diminution in the bliss enjoyed. Even admitting that their words deserve serious consideration as those of trustworthy authorities, they mean only this much that, in the enjoyment of Bhagavan which occurs before *mukti*, there would be degrees of joy. It is true that that there may be delay or no delay in attaining release from bondage, but after release is (once) attained, there is no difference at all in the enjoyment of bliss (between *muktas* and *muktas*).

11. Vishnu Dharmam: 102–29

Some *jīvas* attain, in such worlds as those of Vishnu, the privilege of living in the same world as Vishnu (*sālokya*), some *jīvas* attain proximity to the presence of Vishnu (*sāmīpya*); tome attain forms similar to that of Vishnu (*sārūpya*): these, too, are sometimes called *muktas* by courtesy (*upachāra*), since they are very near the ultimate goal (but they are not really *muktas* in the true sense of the word). This idea is set forth in the following *sloka* :— "Some live[12] in the worlds of Vishnu; others approach very near to Vishnu; others, again, acquire forms resembling Vishnu's; yet others attain *sāyujya* with Vishnu. This, alone, is called *moksha*." This *sloka* declares that only *sāyujya* in *Paramapada* is *moksha*. In the same way as a hundred and the like are included within a thousand, *sālokya* and the like are included within *sāyujya*. The truth of this statement may be seen in the following *sloka* : "I do not at all[12A] beg for *moksha* which goes by the names of *sālokya* and *sarūpya*. I long, O Lord that hast taken a vow (to protect those that seek Thy help) — I long, O Thou with long arms, for *sāyujya* with Thee." *Sāyujya* means the relationship between two who are united in communion (*sayuk*). One might be *sayuk* with another, although only in the common enjoyment of a certain pleasure. Here in regard to the *mukta*, the object of enjoyment is Brahman with His *prakāras* or modes. Since Brahman and the *mukta* both commune with each other in the enjoyment of that bliss, the *mukta* is called *sayuk* (with Brahman).

In this connection, it may be asked why, in one of the passages of the *Veda*, the two words, *sāyujya* and *sārshtithā* are employed (in the same sentence), when they mean the same thing, namely, communion in the enjoyment (would it not be reduntant to use two words when one would be enough?). The answer is (that there is a difference in meaning between the two words), and it is as follows :—

---

12. Bhagavatam

12A. Jitanta Stotram II-36

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

*Sāyujyam* between the two (Brahman and the *mukta*) means that there is no difference sc far as the objects of enjoyment are concerned: *sārshtitā* (between the two) means that there is no difference in the degree or intensity of their enjoyment. (Two men may have before them the same object of enjoyment and yet one of them may enjoy it more intensely than the other).

It is true that the *mukta* has nothing to do with the work of creating, maintaining, destroying and such other things in regard to the world (*Jagad Vyāpāra*). But just as the father who cultivates the field and the sons and others who do not cultivate it enjoy alike the fruit from the cultivated field, Iswara who is engaged in the work of the world (*Jagad Vyāpāra*) and the *mukta* who only witnesses it have the same degree of enjoyment in the joy arising from that work. The author of the *Brahma Sūtras* has stated at the beginning of the section: "(The [13]*mukta's* enjoyment is) exclusive of the work of the world" and concludes it by saying:—" The [14]resemblance or equality (*sāmyam*) between the *mukta* and Brahman is only so far as the enjoyment is concerned, as stated in the *s'rutis*, and also by inference *linga*". Sakatayana has also stated as follows:—" Those who meditate on Brahman say that *sāyujyam* consists in the sameness or equality of enjoyment".

## *REFUTATION OF THE ADVAITIC DOCTRINE OF IDENTITY:*

To those (*viz.* Advaitins) who maintain that the word *Sāyujyam*, means oneness or identity with Brahman (*aikyam*), the derivative or etymological meaning of the word, *sāyujyam*, is at variance, as also the texts* in the *s'ruti* which declare that

13. Brahma sutras: 4–4–17. 14. Brahma sutras: 4–4–21.

*NOTE:— Such *srutis* as the following:—Brahman is the eternal among eternals, the sentient among sentients. (1) He is one and satisfies the desires of the many: *Svetasvatara Upanishad.*

(2) Without any blemish or stain he attains perfect resemblance (*paramam samyam*).

Brahman is different from the *jivas*. Besides, their view is opposed also to the *s'rutis* which declare that the *mukta* will attain perfect *resemblance* (*sāmyam*) to Brahman and that the *mukta* will be *like* Brahman. The author of the *Gītā* has conveyed the same idea in :— "They[15] will attain my *likeness* (*sādharmyam*)".

The Maharshi (*Vyāsa*) has also expressed this idea at great length in the discourse between Vasishta and Karala and concludes by saying that this is the supreme truth :— "The *jiva* released[16] from bondage (*i.e.*) the *mukta*, attains the Supreme Being and acquires attributes similar to those of the Supreme Being. He too becomes free from all imperfections when he reaches Him. Having attained the Omniscient Brahman, he, too, becomes omniscient. Having reached Him who is free from the bondage of *karma*, he, too, becomes free from *karma*. Having attained Bhagavan who is free from suffering and sorrow, he, too, becomes free from them. Having reached Him who is blissful, he, too, becomes blissful. O best of Bharatas, having attained Bhagavan who acts by His will alone (without being influenced by *karma*), he, too, acts merely by his will. He becomes resplendent and having attained Bhagavan who is without the qualities (of *prakriti*) he, too, is without those qualities. Having reached Brahman who is without the body and the senses constituted of matter (*prakriti*), he, too, becomes free from them. Having attained the Supreme Being who is independent of *karma*, he too, becomes independent. I have thus described the truth to you, O great king, just as it is in reality. Having accepted this teaching with a mind free from discontent (*asūya*), meditate on Brahman who is eternal and free from all imperfections and who is the (ultimate) cause of the world".

In the passage cited above, the *mukta* is called 'independent' (*svatantra*), because he is free from the influence of past *karma*. The Bhashyakara (Sri Ramanuja) has explained the meaning of

15. Bhagavad Gita: 14-2

16. Mahabhrata: Santi parva: 313-(26-31)

the word *Svarāt* (literally the independent king) as 'being not subject to *karma*'.

Thus since in the *s'rutis*, the *s'mritis* and the *sūtras*, resemblance between the *mukta* and Brahman (*sāmyam*) is explicitly stated, those places in the texts which seem to speak of identity (*aikyam*) between the *mukta* and Brahman in the state of release from bondage have to be explained in a manner that would not be inconsistent with the *s'rutis* which declare difference between the *jīva* and Brahman. The word *aikyam* or (identity) in such passages should be construed in the same manner as in the *s'loka* :— " The *aikyam* between[16A] Rama and Sugriva arose O, Lady, in this way." (Here *aikyam* means friendship, identity not of self's but of interests).

If it were not construed in this way, it would be in conflict with thousands of authoritative passages like the following :—

(1) " When the[17] person who is twice-born (*dvija*) sees that he is different from the Supreme Being and that the Supreme Being is different from himself, he becomes free from bondage and will see for ever (Bhagavan who is) the 26th real. The Supreme Being is one and the *jīva* — who is the 25th real — is another. Since the Supreme Being is within him (the *jīva*), good men call them one The Supreme Being, O, king, is different from the *jīva*, and the *jīva*, who is the 25th real, is different from the 24 reals. Therefore good men do not consider the *jīva*, who is the 25th real, as being identical with the Supreme Being. So in dread of birth and death, they perform, O Kasyapa, *karma yoga*, acquire thereby purity of mind, and then perform *jnāna yoga*, and then meditate on the Supreme Being as the supreme object of attainment.

(2) *Purushottama*[18] is different from both the *baddha* and *mukta*. He is called the Supreme Being.

16A. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 35–51

17. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 323–(77-80)

18. Bhagavad Gita: 15–17

(3) He who is [19]within the *jīva* as his Inner Ruler — He is eternal : He is free from the qualities of *prakriti* : He should be known as *Nārāyaṇa* : He is the soul of all and is called *Purusha* by the Vedas. The consequences of past *karma* do not cling to Him, in the same way as water does not cling to the leaf of the lotus. The *jīva* who is inferior to the Supreme Being becomes subject to bondage owing to past *karma* and attains *moksha* by meditating on Brahman ".

(4) " Just[20] as fire in a ball of (red-hot) iron seems to be one with the iron, though it is really different from it, so the Supreme Being pervades the world and is inseparable from it ".

Therefore the perfect resemblance of the *jiva* (*parama sāmyam*) (to Brahman) is only that arising from *jnāna* and *bhoga* (enjoyment) and the like. Iswara has, for His definition, the following attributes which are like the umbrella and the *chāmara* (insignia of royalty):— being the cause of the world, the conferring of *moksha* on *jīvas*, being the support of the world, being the controller of the world, the one for whom all things and all sentient beings exist, the one who has everything for His body, the one who is denoted by all words, the one who can be understood from all the *Vedas*, the one who is the refuge of all the world, the one who should be adored by all those who want *moksha*, the one who grants the fruits (of all actions), the one whose essential nature is omnipresence, *Jnāna* and *ānanda* (bliss), the one who is the spouse of Lakshmi. These are peculiar to Him and are His distinctive features. The *mukta's* distinctive attributes are the following :— being sustained (by Iswara); being controlled by Him, existing only for the Lord (*seshtava*), being atomic (*anu*) and such others.

*THE MUKTA WILL NEVER BE IN SAMSĀRA AGAIN:...*

If it be so, it may be asked whether the *mukta* who is not independent (of God) may not, for some reason or other, incur the

19. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: (361–14–15) 20. Jayakhya Samhita: 4

possibility of a return to *samsāra*. The jiva's dependence on Iswara has been stated in the *s'loka* :— "For [21]enabling a man to get the good things of life, and for taking away from him the ills of life, there is no one other than Purushottama who is competent". The answer to that question is, "There will be no such possibility, for has He not Himself declared :— "Those who [22]perform *bhakti yoga* with great devotion and those who have performed *prapatti* which is considered as a superior form of penance (*tapas*) will obtain *sāyujya* and will for ever render service to me. They will always be free from the ills of *samsāra*". Even in the state of desire for *mukti*, the *mukta* had an aversion to the enjoyment of non-sentiment things (matter) and also to the mere enjoyment of his own self (*kaivalya*). This aversion is now well established in him; for as he sees all things having Brahman as their inner self, there is no possibility of his enjoying his own self as separate (from everything else), and as he sees by constant perception (*pratyaksha*) the imperfections of all other objects (than God), there is no possibility of his returning to *samsāra* of his own free will. As his knowledge of the three *tattvas*, *cit*. *acit* and Iswara and of what is good and what is evil, which he acquired before, has now attained expansion without any break or contraction, there is no possibility of his ever going back to *samsāra* owing to *ajnāna* or ignorance. The knowledge which formerly in *samsāra* deepened into the form of love called *bhakti* and which he acquired by his distinctive knowledge of the specific nature of Bhagavan has, now, in the state of *mukti*, become ripened into the form of supreme love, because he has now a vision of all aspects of Bhagavan's distinctive nature of which even the *s'astras* are incapable. Therefore Iswara's great love for him as stated in the *s'loka* : "The *jnānī* is[23] dear to me (How dear he is to me cannot be described even by me, Ominscient though I am)" — Iswara's love for him is so overwhelming that its flow is irresistible and that its current reaches even those uplands which are connect-

21. Parama Samhita:
22. Parama Samhita:
23. Bhagavad Gita: 7-17

ed with him only in distant relationship. Therefore it cannot be stated that, though he is free from *karma*, there is the possibility of his returning to *samsāra* by the will of Iswara who is independent (and all-powerful). Since the *mukta* is no longer subject to the injunctions of *s'āstra*, there is no possibility of his violating the Lord's command in the state of *mukti*. He cannot do anything opposed to the will of Iswara as the Lord's pleasure is now his pleasure. Therefore the ultimate goal or attainment called *moksha*, which is of the nature of perfect and full enjoyment of Brahman and which extends into service, has now become eternal for him (*i. e.*) it will last as long as his soul lasts. Considering all this, the *Sūtra-kāra* said :— "There[23] is no return (to *samsāra*) - no return, for the Scripture says so."

*TAMIL VERSE :*

Having reached the dazzling region of *Paramapada* and approached the Lord crowned with fragrant *tulasī*, who is ever delighted in doing what is good to all beings, and having obtained our share in service (to them), we shall ever live under the sounding anklets of the assembly of our *āchāryas* and enjoy delights which will never change and which will spring (from within us) to our great joy.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

May varied forms of service which are the overflow of the blissful enjoyment of Brahman arising from the greatness of His qualities and glorious possessions which are blended together like honey and milk - may these forms of service in which there is a conflict of hundreds of unwearied desires (to render service) and which are easy of attainment for such as seers and *sūris* — may these manifest themselves in my mind !

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :* (Summary of Part I)

Having received* the gracious look (of the Lord and of the *Āchārya*) and understood what is most essential and most

23. Brahma Sutras: 4-4-22

important in the *s'āstras* (*viz.* the three *mantras* or *rahasyas*), having obtained a clear and accurate knowledge of his own self and of the Supreme Being and conquered his attachment to other interests in life, having acquired a knowledge of what is appropriate for the different kinds of *adhikāris*, and realised the nature of the two *upāyas* (*bhakti* and *prapatti*), having become troubled (in mind) (at his inability to adopt other *upāyas*) and performed *bharanyāsa* with all its *angas* and thus done what he ought to do, performing here in this world the adoration of the Lord (and His devotees) without faults and in accordance with his state or *nishtā* and in the manner prescribed in the *s'āstras* and having (thereafter) cast off (both) the gross (*sthūla*) and subtle *prakriti* (body), some one there may be who enjoys Bhagavan eternally.

(NOTE :— This *sloka* refers concisely to the gist of each of the twenty-two chapters in the first part of the treatise.)

*End of the Part which forms the Exposition of Doctrine.*

# APPENDIX

*( Chapter V Page 65 )*

## *THE VIS'ĀKHASTAMBHA AS DESCRIBED IN THE SĀTVATA SAMHITĀ AND THE LAKSHMĪ TANTRA.*

In the region of eternal glory (*nitya vibhūti*), there is a huge column constituted of *s'uddhasattvam.* It is a special form in which Bhagavan appears there. This column or pillar is called *Vis'akha yoopa.* The column consists of four parts called, respectively, *jāgrat,* (the waking state), *svapna* (the dream), *sushupti* (dreamless sleep) and *turīya* (the fourth stage), counting from below upwards. In the part called *jāgratsthāna,* which is somewhere above the base of the column, there are four divine forms on the four sides called, respectively, Vasudeva, Sankarshana, Pradyumna and Aniruddha facing the east, the south the west and the north and shining like branches around that part of the column. This collection of four forms is called *Jāgratvyūha.* The activity of this *vyūha* is the creation, maintenance and destruction of the world. The four forms are bright in colours, white, red and the like. They have also arms or weapons. Above this part of the column is the part called *svapnasthāna.* Here, too, there are four divine forms Vasudeva, Sankarshna, Pradyumna and Aniruddha shining like branches, as before, to the east, the south, the west and the north. This collection of four *vyūhas* in the second part of the column from below is called *svapnavyūha.* These four forms have no activities like creation and maintenance, but have only the will to do so. Their colours, too, are not so bright as those of the lower *vyūha.* They have weapons but no banners and other accessories. Above the *svapnasthāna,* which is the second part from below, is the third part or *sthāna* called *sushuptisthāna.* Here too there are four divine forms with the same names as in the two other parts already described and in the same order. This collection of four forms is called *sushuptivyūha.* These forms have neither activities nor even the will or the desire to act.

They have just the experience of their own bliss and nothing else. In the form of Vasudeva which is like a branch of the column shooting on the eastern side, there is no such thing as a body with limbs and the like and it shines with all the six qualities. The other three forms, Sankarshana and the like on the other three sides have a body with hands, feet and the like. But they have no weapons; on the palms they bear lines resembling the conch, and the weapons. These forms have no colours. The uppermost or fourth part of the column (*Turīya sthāna*) has also similar four forms with the same names as in the former parts. This collection of four is the *Turīya vyūha*. They have no bodies with limbs and the like but resemble the *Vāsudeva* form of the *sushupti vyūha*. They have no activities, no will, no weapons and no lines on the palm resembling arms All the six qualities shine in the form called Vasudeva and the other three have, each, only two of these qualities The names *jāgrat*, *svapna*, *sushupti* and *turīya* are given to them on the analogy of these states in man in the ordinary world, according to the greater or the lesser activity found in each. The *turīya* state is like that in a swoon when even the breath is suspended, whereas in the *sushupti state*, the man just breathes in or breathes out; in the *svapna*, his external senses cease to act, only the mind is active, in the *jāgrat* state, both the mind and the external senses act.

These four parts with four *vyūhas* in each correspond to the four stages of development that may be found in the worshipper who meditates on them. On the lowest stage of meditation, there is no full control of the external senses and the mind; in the second stage of development, control of the external senses has been attained but not of the mind; in the next stage, the mind, too, has been controlled and the man who meditates is seen just breathing in and breathing out with no other activity or sign of life; in the last or perfect development of meditation, he is like one in a swoon, not even breathing in or out.

# PART II

## *The Discussion and clarification of Doubts and Disputed Points*

## (23) THE CHAPTER ON THE CLARIFICATION OF WHAT IS MEANT BY THE UPAYA THAT IS ALREADY EXISTENT. (SIDDHOPAYA)

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

The Supreme Person who knows all things, at the same time, by direct perception (*pratyaksha*) and without any aid or instrument (in the form of sense organs), who is the boundless and divine ocean of mercy, protects the world, with the daughter of the ocean (Lakshmi), being omnipotent. Having accepted the responsibility of saving those who follow the right path, He is the *upāya* that is already existent.

(NOTE:— By *Siddhopaya*, the author means Bhagavan who is the *upaya* already existent for those who perform *prapatti*. By *Sadhyopaya* he means such *upayas* or means as *bhakti* and *prapatti* which secure the Lord's favour so that He may act as the *Siddhopaya*).

### *RECAPITULATION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE FIRST PART*:

We have already described below how the *jīva* (*Kshetrajna*), who has been wandering in *samsāra* from beginningless time, becomes averse to it by the mercy of God which is awaiting an opportunity (to help him), how he understands from the right *s'āstras* (the truth about) the *tattvas*, the means or *upāya* and the ultimate goal or aim of life, and how he becomes eager to attain *moksha*. (We have already described how he adopts (owing to this desire for *moksha*) an *upāya* or means (*bhakti* or *prapatti*) which is in accord with his fitness or competency, how he thereby does what should be done, how, having realised his state as a

*prapanna* or *bhakta*, he renders faultless service in accordance with that state and in accordance with the *s'astras*, for the remaining term of his life here. (We have already described), how, after the fall of the body, he reaches a region free from the touch of matter (*prakriti*) by journeying along the shining path beginning with *archis* and how he attains there the supreme end, namely perfect service which is the overflow of the unlimited enjoyment of Bhagavan.

### *THREE CAUSES BY WHICH THE LORD'S GRACE IS WON:*

There are three main causes for the removal of the will of the Lord imposed on men as a punishment for past sins, owing to which the *jīvas* who are subject to the sway of past *karma* have no clear knowledge concerning the *upāya* that is already existent (namely Bhagavan), the *upāya* by which His favour is secured (*Sādhyopāya*) and also the potency of these *upāyas*. They are as follows:— One is the speech that comes from the lips of Lakshmi: If one asks, *"May this *S'araṇāgati* by mine!" Her reply is *"Let it be yours; everything will be obtained by it alone." Next is the grace of the good *āchārya* and the third is the observance of the tradition of the righteous. The means (*vyāja*) by which the grace of the good *āchārya* can be secured and the benefits arising therefrom may be understood from the episodes of Parasara, Maitreya, Sanjaya, Asvalayana and others.

NOTE:— By the advice of Vasishta, Parasara put a stop to the performance of a *satra* (sacrifice) which was aimed at the destruction of Rakshasas. Pleased with this, Vasishta and Pulastya blessed him for his forbearance with a knowledge of the *sastras* and with the gifts necessary for the composition of a *purana*.

Maitreya studied the *Vedas*, the *dharma sastras* and the Vedangas from his *guru* and, by his grace, obtained a knowledge of Vedanta by which he realised how the origin, maintenance and destruction of the world occur and how there is nothing other than Vishnu.

*Sri Ramanuja: Saranagati gadya

Sanjaya says.— "By the grace of Vyasa, I listened to this supreme *Yoga*, the most secret of all, from Krishna Himself the Lord of all *Yogas*". Aswalayana learnt the *Rig Veda* by his devotion to Sounaka.

The observance of the tradition of the righteous consists in this :--

Full of the quality of *sattva*, and entering his career of discipleship in the right manner and with perfect attention and concentration of mind, one should learn from the good *āchārya* who is without any expectation of renown, wealth or honours and who is under the sway of compassion, the truths concerning the *tattvas* and the means or *hita*, which have come down in regular succession to the present day from the Lord of All, who is the first *āchārya* of all. While imparting instruction, there should be no unnecessary elaboration and no skipping over points that require clear exposition. The instruction received is such as follows :— Madhava[1] (the Lord of Lakshmi) is both the father and the mother of all the worlds. O, best of men, seek refuge under that Saviour by *s'āraṇāgati*". To those who are faithful and pious but who are not competent to enter on the difficult study of the *s'āstras*, which might, owing to their difficulty, unsettle the mind, this instruction by the *guru* is alone important. To others, the study of the *s'āstras* with the proper exercise of reason is legitimate for their own clear understanding and for convincing those who are deluded by the specious arguments (of rival thinkers).

### *FORMS OF INFIDELITY:*

It has been said, "He who [2]understands *dharma* prescribed in the *Vedas* and the *smritis* with the help of arguments not opposed (to the spirit of) the *Vedas* and *s'āstras* — he alone knows *dharma*, and not others." Those who have not understood *dharma* by the proper exercise of reason will become rationalistic

1. Mahabharata : Aranya Parva : 192-56
2. Manu Smriti : 12-106

(and sceptical) and will misinterpret the true meaning with specious arguments inconsistent with the *Vedas*; it has been stated that "by the followers[3] of Kanada (Vaiseshika logicians), the followers of Sakya (Buddhists) and the heretics, the *dharma* ordained in the Vedas has disappeared."

This misinterpretation or denial is of two kinds — that concerning the glorious possessions (*vibhūti*) and that concerning the One who possesses these glories. That concerning the One who possesses the glories consists in denying the existence of the Supreme Ruler, the Lord of Lakshmi, or declaring some other deity as the Supreme Ruler and relegating the real Supreme Ruler to the category of His possessions (*vibhūti*). The misconception or misinterpretation concerning the glories consists in this:— denying the existence of these glories (or objects created by God) or considering these *vibhūtis* as existing but as independent of the Lord by denying their relationship to Him, or declaring that they are dependent on oneself or others.

### *ASSOCIATION WITH WICKED MEN SHOULD BE AVOIDED*:

Any one of these forms of denial might occur in the case of a weak-minded man who has performed *prapatti*, on account of association with those who are not fit to be associated with If such a misconception should occur, it is worse[4] "than the great sin of taking back a thing that has been given away (in charity)". That sin will deprive a man of the merit acquired by all previous gifts made from the time of birth onwards. But this is worse, for the object of the gift was itself acquired by stealth from the person to whom it was given later, and then the person is robbed of what was given to him. Therefore, of the many causes of delusion, association with rationalists (and sceptics) is most to be avoided. This has been declared in passages like the following:

3. Atri Smriti.

4. Sandilya Smriti.

"These[5] who are heretics opposed to the Vedas, those who do things forbidden in the *śāstras*, those who are like cats (deceiving others), sceptics, rationalists who depend only on reason, those who are like cranes (ever injuring others who are near them) — these should never be honoured even with words"; so it is said also:— "A man [6]suffering from starvation may beg money of a king, of his own pupil, and of the men whom he has helped to perform a sacrifice (*yajna*): But one should never beg of those who are dissemblers, rationalists, heretics and men with the nature of cranes." Again, "One [7]should associate with good men (*i.e.* men who know God.) Whether in dispute or friendship, one should associate only with them; one should never do any of these things with the wicked (those who do not believe in God), "Give up [8]the company of the wicked; associate ever with the good; do whatever is righteous, both in the day and in the night, remember always that you yourself and those who are related to you are not immortal." And again, "Far better[9] is it to dwell in a cage of flaming fire than to commit the crime of dwelling with sceptics, who do not countenance any thought of Souri (Bhagavan)."

Conversation with rationalists makes men foolish in spite of their seeing, 'as their [10]knowledge is lost by specious reasoning.' (this association with rationalists) removes men from every one of the four classes which Iswara calls His own, in the *śloka*: "My [11]people" are of four classes and they are all known to be my *bhaktas*." It would take them away from the group of men whom Sri Ranganatha calls "lads[12] who are worthy of His love." It would throw them into the midst of those who are outside the range of Bhagavan's love as declared in: "There are[12A] wicked

5. Manu Smriti: 4-30
6. Yagnavalkya Smriti 1-130
7. ?
8. Mahabharata: Aranya Parva
9. ?
10. Bhagavad Gita: 7-18
11. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 350-34
12. Tirumalai: 37
12A. Bhagavad Gita VII - 15

men who do not seek my protection by performing *prapatti*; they are of four classes: fools, men who are vile, men who have lost their knowledge by specious reasoning and men who are of the nature of the Asuras."

Even men with supreme faith that have sought the protection of the Supreme Ruler who is the Saviour of those that have no one to protect them — even they, we *know, become deluded by association with others; though they are not cast away, they have afterwards to be corrected by good *āchāryas*.

Have not the great sages declared:— "If there[13] were only one *s'āstra*, it would be possible to acquire knowledge free from doubts. Because there are many *s'āstras* in this world, it is exceedingly difficult to obtain knowledge that is true" and again, "The Lord[14] dwells in all who are free from doubt. The Lord of Lakshmi never dwells with those who are full of doubt owing to the exercise of free thinking."

It is true that it has been stated: "In those[14A] who have *bhakti* to Purushottama, there is no anger, no hatred, no covetousness nor impure minds", but this is applicable only to those individuals who are perfect in the possession of spiritual qualities. In the case of those who have yet to ascend to that high spiritual level, it is well-known that their minds may become deluded Thus it has been said "We hear [15]that the gods (*devas*), in dread of the diminution of *samsāra* among those who are devoted to Govinda, become their enemies, (*i.e.* try to hinder devotion)" and again, "To [16]truthfulness in speech, there are a hundred hindrances; to *tapas* or the performance of austerities, the hindrances are a thousand; and *bhakti* to Govinda meets with ten

---

*NOTE:— Embar became subject to misconceptions owing to his association with Yadavaprakasa and had to be corrected by Peria Tirumalai Nambi.

13. Itihasa Samucchyam: 33-105
14. Mahabharata - Santi Parva: 359-71
14A Mahabharata: Anusasanika parva: 254-135
15. Vishnu dharma: 2-25
16. Vishnu dharma: 74-94

thousand hindrances". Here we will first speak of the doubts (or misconceptions) that are likely to arise in regard to *Siddhopāya*, the *upāya*, namely Bhagavan, that is already existent and consider the way in which these doubts may be cleared.

*( HEREAFTER THE AUTHOR STATES POSSIBLE DOUBTS AND MISCONCEPTIONS AND TRIES TO REMOVE THEM ):*

*Doubt* (1):— No *upāya* is necessary on the part of the *jīva :*

(1) Iswara who ignored a man from beginningless time has now concerned Himself with him (for his protection). This is not due to any action or work on the man's part, but only to the Lord's omnipotence. If it is not so, how is it that when the Alvar asked :—" The Lord has[17] now made me realise Him and placed Himself within me. Why is it that He allowed me formerly to stray from Him ?," no reply was given except that "the cloud[18] which adorned the measureless sky thundered in music". The implication is that there is no answer to this question except that it was the Lord's will to do so. Therefore why should we perform or adopt any *upāya* (for securing His protection)? Some say, therefore, that, of His own[19] accord, and at the time when He chooses, the Lord saves us and that the Lord bestows His grace on His servants and protects them when He is pleased to do so and that no endeavour of any kind is incumbent on us.

This doubt may be cleared as follows :— Although Iswara is omnipotent, He makes the man adopt some gesture, some means (*vyāja*) or pretext on his part and, in consideration of it, protects him in order that the faults of partiality and cruelty (*vaishamya, nāirghrṇya*) may not stain Him. The Alwar himself has declared this truth in :—" I said [20]"Tirumalirunjolai" and immediately, the Lord of Lakshmi filled my mind with His presence." (The *Vyāja,*

17. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–8–9.
18. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–9–1.
19. Tiruvoymozhi: 1–7–5.
20. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–8-1.

endeavour, or gesture, here, is the utterance of the word *Tirumāl-irunjolai* by the Alwar). It may be asked "This *vyāja*, too, is adopted by the Lord's grace. Why did He not make the person adopt it before?" The answer is as follows:—"The souls of men have streams of *karma* flowing from beginningless time. These streams of past *karma* produce their respective consequences at different times and Iswara has to bestow, on each individual, the rewards or punishments that are in accordance with such *karma.* If He were to do otherwise, He would be tainted with partiality (and injustice). Iswara did not make the person adopt the *vyāja* before, as the time for the ripening of the fruit of the *karma* had not yet come. Therefore, from the effect we have to infer the cause, as stated above. If this view be not accepted, no follower of any system will be able to answer the question why a person acquires (at a certain time) such things as eagerness for *moksha,* which did not exist before. That these are due to the varied nature of the streams of beginningless *karma* is the common explanation for both those who believe in Iswara and those who do not. Iswara's independence and omnipotence consist in His determination to protect the *jīva* when He chooses to do so, on the adoption of a *vyāja* or some form of *upāya* (endeavour) (or even an apology for *upāya*) and in there being no power to prevent Him from doing so.

If this is so, it may be asked how we are to explain the verse of the Alvar cited before, when he put the question why the Lord did not choose to save him before and received no answer and also the texts according to which the Lord is the unconditional Saviour: Our answer is as follows:—The Alvar attaches great importance to Iswara's omnipotence and compassion and ignores the *vyāja* or *vyājas* adopted by himself, by which special means he secured the Lord's compassion, when he says. "For Thy neglect of me in former times and for taking me into Thy favour at present, I see no prominent causes other than Thy omnipotence and compassion. But, if owing to Thy omniscience, Thou hast seen any such cause, favour me with a knowledge of it". The Lord gave no reply and

thereby the Alvar revealed to the world that the primary or prominent causes were only His omnipotence and compassion. This does not mean that there was no subsidiary cause or *vyāja* on the part of the Alvar. From this it follows that the primary cause for making the *jīva* an instrument of His *Līlā* is His omnipotence (*svātantryam*) and the subsidiary cause thereof is violation of the command of the omnipotent Lord which has been flowing like a stream from beginningless time. Now the primary cause for making the *jīva* an instrument of His *bhoga* (in Paramapada) is the Lord's natural compassion. The subsidiary cause (*sahakāri kāraṇa*) is the *vyaja* (*bhakti* or *prapatti*) which extinguishes the Lord's punishment (hitherto) acting as a hindrance or obstacle. *Bhakti* and *prapatti* which are adopted as *vyaja* to secure Iswara's favour, are, themselves, the result of His compassion due to special acts of merit. These reveal Iswara's omnipotent and compassionate nature. The *prapanna* should bear in mind this attribute of the Lord, His being free from partiality and cruelty (*vaishamya* and *nairghrṇya*) and bondage and *moksha* being dependent on the violation of His command and the adoption of the *vyāja*, respectively, as they are all based on *pramāṇas*. Thus it becomes his duty to lead the life of staunch and exclusive devotion with firm faith in the compassion of the omnipotent. This is the (real) meaning,

The omnipotence of one who has no compassion is dangerous to others; the compassion of one who is not omnipotent is not helpful to others and may also cause pain to the one who feels compassion. But the compassion of a person who is also omnipotent can accomplish whatever is desired and will bring delight to him and be the cause of immediately relieving the distress of those who seek his help and of giving them what they long for.

In regard to incarnations, it has been said, "In[21] the distresses of men, Sri Rama is greatly distressed". (It may be asked how this distress can be reconciled with the delight spoken of above).

21. Ramayana: Ayodhya Kanda: 2-40

It means only this: that this distress is only in order to give delight to those who are worthy of His grace. In the case of wicked men with the nature of Asuras, the distress assumed by the *avatār* is to make the evil-doer become deluded into thinking that he is not Iswara's incarnation. The great sages have declared the truth of what has been said so far in the following *s'lokas*: "It [22]is Bhagavan alone that rules over time and death — over those that move and those that do not move. I am stating the truth to you; the Lord of all the worlds, though possessed of omnipotence and omniscience, begins to act (during incarnations), as if He were only a weak tiller of the soil. In this way, by His association with wonderful powers, He deludes the world, but those who seek refuge under Him are never deluded", and "Sri [23]Krishna, who had large eyes, removed the burden off the earth, deluded the whole world and has now gone back to His own abode," and again "He imitates[23A] the actions of those who have the bodies of men, but the *līlā* of the Lord of the world is dependent only on His will". Therefore in the stories of the *avatārs* or incarnations, the distress is only of the nature of play-acting and that, too, has compassion as its cause. It is of the nature of *līlā* or sport to the Omnipotent. Have we not seen hunchbacks and dwarfs often taken into protection by kings who do not expect any return from them? It is a matter of *līlā* or play to them and, at the same time, the consequence of compassion. That is why it is said, "The Upanishads[24] state that the Lord of Sri creates, maintains, controls and does such other things in regard to sentient and non-sentient things, only for His own sake. It is therefore, O, Lord of Sriranga, Thy nature to be the means of salvation (*upāya*) for the *jīva* and also the object of attainment. Therefore I seek Thee as my *upāya* without any thought of my own interests."

Since Bhagavan is the seat of the activity for the good of others, He is the Saviour of those who seek refuge under Him and

22. Mahabharata: Udyoga Parva: 67 (13–15)
23. Mahabharata: Mousala Parva: 9–34
23A Vishnupurana: V 22–18
24. Rangarajastavam: Uttara. satakam: 87

since He places Himself in the place of other *upāyas* (like *para bhakti*) (in order to protect them), He is also the *upāya*. Since He is the seat of the fruit of the activity of protecting (namely, His delight), He is the *seshī* and consequently the object of attainment. That His being all this is due to His essential nature (*svarūpa*) is understood from the *pramāṇas* or authorities which help us to know Him. Of the principal qualities of Iswara, such as *jnāna* (knowledge) *sakti* or power and compassion, knowledge and power are qualities which come into play for both punishment and favour, whereas compassion comes into play (only) in conferring favours. Compassion, here, means, the inclination to do good to others. Bhagavan's compassion comes into play in all the following:—in the creation and sustenance of the three kinds of sentient beings (*baddha*, *mukta* and *nitya*), in keeping them in activities pleasing to the Lord, in the eternal enjoyment of the *eternal sūris*, in seeing that those who have obtained release from bondage do not return to *samsāra*, in the creation of all things (like *mahat*, *ahankāra tanmātras*, *etc*) in *līlā vibhūti* (*i.e.*) in this world, in the pure creation called His *avatār* untainted with matter, in propagating a knowledge of the *sāstras* and in causing through them a knowledge of the *tattvas* and of the means of attaining *mukti*, in creating an eagerness for *moksha*, in enabling a person to do meritorious actions which would become the *vyāja* or *upāya* for causing the eagerness for *moksha*, in prescribing *upayas* suited to the nature of each individual for wiping out the punishment for violation of His commands, in being accessory to the mind being prompted to adopt the *upāya*, in removing any obstacles that might stand in the way of the man who has adopted *bhakti* as the *upāya* (*upāsaka*) in standing, in the case of those who are destitute of other *upāyas* (*i.e.*) *prapannas*, in the place of these *upāyas* and protecting them from all danger, in ignoring countless offences of a serious nature committed by the *jīva* from beginningless time, by being gracious to him on account of the *vyāja* or *upāya* performed by him and releasing him from *samsāra* so that he may enjoy endless bliss, in bestowing *moksha*

immediately on those *prapannas* who are impatient of delay, and, in the case of those *prapannas* who are not impatient of delay and who have forgotten to beg for a life free from sin (after *prapatti*), in creating repentance for any offences committed by them owing to past *karma* which has begun to operate (*prārabdha*) and inducing the person to perform the necessary *prāyas'chitta* or expiation suited to his competency; in the case of those who are too hard-hearted to perform *prāyas'-chitta*, in preventing their entrance into the world of *Yama* and loss of the benefit begged for by them by seeing that they are punished for these offences (committed after *prapatti*) in this life itself with sufferings (like blindness and lameness) — in all these the Lord's compassion is the principal and common cause.

Iswara, who is endowed with compassion as described above, is called *Siddhopāya* or the *upāya* that is already existent; thus it is said:— " Those [25]Brahmins who know the first part of the *Veda* and those who know the latter part of it, which treats of the Supreme Being — they state that Sri Krishna is the eternal *dharma* (*i.e.*) the *upāya* that always exists." *Bhakti* and *prapatti*, which are adopted as the means for making Him gracious are called *sādhyopāyas* (*i e*) *upāyas* to be adopted for securing His grace.

### *THE CONTENTION THAT THERE IS NO INJUNCTION TO PERFORM PRAPATTI AS AN UPĀYA:*

(2) The injunction to perform *prapatti* is contained in the words. " Seek refuge under me [26]alone ". Some say that it is not an injunction to perform *prapatti* and that this *prapatti* should be considered as an attribute of the person specified. We answer as follows :— This attribute cannot be held as that of the person so concerned or qualified, as it does not satisfy the definition of an

25. Mahabharata: Aranya parva: 71–123

26. Bhagavad Gita: Charama Sloka

adjectival attribute.* This statement is therefore contrary to *pramāṇa* or authority. If this were not so, while Iswara is the *upāya* for *bhakti*, the *śāstras* which prescribe certain forms of meditation and the like might also be considered as speaking of the attributes of the person concerned and not actions to be performed.

### *THE ROLE OF SIDDHOPAYA AND SADHYOPĀYA*

(3) Therefore the exaggerated statement of some that *prapatti* is not an *upāya* is only to be taken as stressing the importance of *Siddhopāya* (*i.e.*) Iswara who is the existent *upāya* (and not to state that *prapatti* is not an *upāya*). *Siddhopāya* is of prime importance, because if, by proper propitiation, the punishment of the Lord is cancelled, it becomes helpful for the enjoyment or experience (of *Bhagavān*) which is natural to the Self (in its purity). If it is asked how this happens, the answer is as follows:- When the gem is cleansed of the dust (enveloping it), it shines with a natural radiance, but this natural radiance is due only to the will of Iswara that ordains its having radiance. So also the expansion of knowledge and other attributes which the *mukta* acquires are due to the will of Iswara, which ordains them. Likewise, in the case of the eternal *sūris* (their eternal possession of certain attributes is due to the will of the Lord). Learned men expressed this idea briefly in the *śloka* :— "All [28]things have their being in accordance with Thy will; among them some are ever pleasing to Thee; they are eternal; Thy noble attributes which are, by nature, subject to Thee illustrate this truth to us". Therefore, though *Siddhopāya* or Iswara who is the existent *upāya* is all-important, the means of obtaining His grace, otherwise called *sadhyopāya*, has also to be adopted. This is not

* NOTE :— "He who desires *svarga* should perform the Jyotishtoma sacrifice". Here, 'who desires *svarga* is an attribute or adjective of the person and the injunction is that he should perform the sacrifice. In *Mam Ekam Saranam Vraja*, the *prapatti* has to be performed *after* hearing the *vidhi* or injunction; it did not exist before, like the desire for *svarga* in the example cited. Therefore, it is not an attribute; besides *vraja* is a verb that prescribes an action.

27.

28. Vaikuntastava: 36

at variance with the statements of former *āchāryas* as seen in *Tiruvoymozhi* (10-8-9), cited before.

The *s'loka* which says: "The Lord [29]who took the necessary means or *upāya* for making me live, while yet in my mother's womb — is He now asleep or is He now dead in regard to the means to be adopted for making me live after being born?" — this is sometimes quoted in support of the statement that the Lord is alone the *upāya* and that the *jīva* has to do nothing at all by way of *upāya* or *vyāja*. It should be taken only as meaning that we should not seek any other protector (and not to forbid man from any form of endeavour). Otherwise one will have to give up even such endeavours as have to be made for obtaining food.

Likewise the following *s'lokas*:—" The embodied[30] being is like a lump of clay subject to the will of another and unable to help himself. How, then, can he protect another?," and " The *jīva* [31]is ignorant and absolutely helpless in matters concerning his pleasures and pains. He goes to *svarga* or *naraka* being directed by Iswara, who rules over all," and also, [32]"Inscrutable is Bhagavan He cannot be ordered by any one. He can go wherever He chooses. He has all beings under His control. Like a child playing with its toys, He plays with beings (and enjoys His *līla*)" — in these *s'lokas*, what is intended to be stated is only the *jīva's* entire dependence (on the Lord) and Iswara treating him in accordance with his *karma*. (They do not prescribe the giving up of all endeavour on the part of the *jīva*). If this interpretation is not accepted for the verse in *Tiruvoymozhi* (quoted above) and for these *s'lokas*, there will be conflict with all *s'āstras* and also inconsistencies with what has been said before.

So far we have dispelled certain misconceptions that may arise from a consideration of Iswara's omnipotence and the compassion which is natural to Him. We will now proceed to clear doubts

29. Vishnudharma:
30. Mahabharata: Santi parva 294–19
31. Mahabharata: Santi parva 12–36
32. Mahabharata: Sabha parva 40–78

which might arise from a consideration of the peculiar relationship ( that exists between the *jīva* and Iswara ).

## (4) THE CONTENTION THAT BEGGING FOR PROTECTION IS INCONSISTENT WITH OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE *S'ESHĪ*.

There are some who deny the need for *sādhyopāya* or the means or endeavour for winning the Lord's grace, by stressing the point that He is the *s'eshī* for whom we exist and to whom we belong. ( They argue as follows): "Iswara is the *s'eshī* and we are like His sucklings as expressed by the sages to Sri Rama: "We [33]are like babies in the embryo", who ever heard of a suckling doing anything other than crying for mother's milk, such as paying wages for it? Would it be consistent with the essential nature ( *svarūpa* ) of the *jīva* to perform the surrender of the self ( *ātma samarpaṇam*), to ask for protection, to have full faith in His protection and such other things ?".

We meet this objection as follows :— The great sages and the author of *Srī Bhāshya* observed, in their own lives, the injunction about self-surrender by begging for the Lord's protection with faith preceding it. They have cited *s'āstras* in support of this ( traditional ) practice and have handed it down as instructions for successive ( generations ). Therefore though Iswara's relationship as the *s'eshī* is eternal, He will not protect the *jīva* who is subject to the influence of past *karma*, unless the *jīva* adopts some form of *sādhyopāya* or endeavour ( for winning His grace). This truth has to be accepted by every one who holds by the *s'āstras*. If the *s'āstras* are given up ( as authorities ), there will be no Iswara at all to stand in the relationship of the *s'eshī* ( to the *jīva* ).

It was stated previously that, owing to His being the *s'eshī*, Iswara is bound to protect the *jīva* and that the *jīva* being the *s'esha* is neither called upon nor able to protect himself. What was said there is ( not inconsistent with what is said here ).

33. Ramayana : Aranya kanda : 1-31

There, with an illustration from ordinary life, the relationship between the protector and the protected was shown to consist in the protector being bound to protect and being capable of doing so. It was not meant to show that the Protector would protect in every case, whether or not there is endeavour on the part of the *jīva* to win His grace by propitiation. If that view were taken, it would mean that all souls should be eternally free from bondage. If it be maintained that, in the matter of protection, the Lord, being omnipotent, chooses to save some and not others, then it would mean that the Lord is partial to some and cruel to others.

Those who maintain these propositions merely on the basis of reason cannot say that the knowledge of the relationship (of the *s'eshin* and the *s'esha*) is alone required for securing protection and that no request for protection need be made. For have we not seen that non-sentient things, cattle, deer, birds and the like and suckling children are protected, though they have no knowledge of this relationship, just as they do not ask for protection? If it be held that, though we have seen (such instances), yet the knowledge of that relationship is required on the authority of the *s'āstras*, we answer that, if so, by the very authority of the *s'āstras*, the special kind of knowledge consisting in *bhakti* and *prapatti* will also have to be accepted (as necessary).

If it be held that what is required for protection is that, while being protected, there should be, in addition to the relationship, no attempt to prevent protection, we answer that, in that case, the Lord should grant *moksha* to all in such states as dreamless sleep (*sushupti*), (where there is the relationship and no attempt on the part of the *jīva* to prevent protection). If, on the other hand, it be maintained that there should be no attempt to prevent protection in those mental states in which one is capable of doing so, we answer that we have seen protection of even non-sentient things which are incapable of preventing it and of even such sentient beings as cattle and sons which attempt to prevent it.

From the *s'loka*: "Those that [34]have *nāthās* (lords or protectors) in the world do not perform their duty of protecting themselves. It is their *Nātha* or lord who puts forth endeavours on their behalf, just as *S'ībi* and others did the duties which should have been performed by *Yayāti*" — from this *s'loka*, it should not be thought that endeavour on the part of those that are to be protected is not required at all. For the word *Nātha* is from the root *nath* and means, here, the begging for protection and *nāthavantah* in that *s'loka* means, by the force of the termination (*vat* or *mathup*) those who have a protector. So the word *nāthavantah* in the *s'loka* suggests, by the etymological meaning of *natha* and by the termination (*mathup*) which shows the relationship (of *s'eshin* and *s'esha*) that is necessary for the state of being carefree, the prayer for protection and the act of self-surrender. Otherwise there should be (as said before) *moksha* for all and other such objections. If it is said that the word *nāthavantah* in that *s'loka* should not be interpreted as having a suggestion of all the meanings (referred to), we have to state that analogies taken from ordinary life should not be pressed too far in the *s'astra* on *moksha*, for they would be at variance with actual and explicit statements made in the *s'āstra*).

We shall now explain the real purport of the words of trust-worthy authors where the apparent meaning would seem to be that, while Iswara is the Protector or Saviour of all, we are not required to put forth any endeavour for our protection. Their real meaning is this.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

When self-surrender has been performed for the sake of a certain object, there should be no repetition of that performance for the same object, (The need for the adoption of the *upāya* or endeavour in the form of *prapatti* at first is not denied). Even before *prapatti*, the *jīva* could not act independently of the Lord.

34. Mahabharata: Aranya Parva: 121-2.

There is no injunction for an endeavour at a later time also for protection, when *once* the surrender of the responsibility for protection has been made in accordance with *pramāṇas.* For even in that act of the original *prapatti*, the surrender of the responsibility for one's protection was made possible by Iswara, out of consideration for some meritorious act performed by the *jīva* as a result of the ripening of past *karma* flowing like a stream without any beginning. Since even this *prapatti* was the Lord's doing, we should not be under the impression that we are protecting ourselves. We should feel that the Lord who, we are taught in the *Moolamantram*, is the Protector of all — that He made us adopt a certain means and became propitiated thereby so as to protect us. The (following) *s'loka* conveys the same idea:— " My Master Himself makes me surrender myself to Him, as I am His *s'esha* and am ever subject to Him. (I surrender myself to Him) with the help of the intelligence given to me by Him and am now free from all responsibility in regard to my protection as He has taken that responsibility on Himself ".

This is the form prescribed for enabling us to meditate on Bhagavan without the faults of the desire for renown, gain, honour or benefit, and of attachment to the fruit, the notion of one's being the (independent) doer and having an *upāya.* Therefore such things as the prayer for protection are like the child's act of sucking the mother's milk and the grace of the Lord flows like mother's milk (after the propitiation). From this it follows that (in stressing the need for the *jīva*'s endeavour), we do not minimise the primary importance of *Siddhopāya*, namely, *Īs'wara*, who is the existent *upāya.*

So far we have dispelled the misconceptions that might arise from a consideration of the peculiar attributes and the peculiar relationship (of *s'esha* and *s'eshī*) which are revealed in the word *Nārāyaṇa.*

## (5) LAKSHMI IS AS MUCH THE UPAYA AS THE LORD HIMSELF:

Hereafter we shall proceed briefly to remove certain misconceptions which arise from the relationship of spouse that is expressed in the word *S'rīmat* (having Lakshmi) as existing between Sri and the Supreme Ruler who has consecrated Himself for the sacrifice or *yajna* of saving all. As stated in the following *s'loka*, "It is said [35]in all religious systems and in the *Vedanta* that Bhagavan acts as the Saviour only in the company of Lakshmi, who is the very embodiment of compassion". (The phrase, 'religious systems' here refers to the four Pancharatra systems).

There are some who hold that, in the former part of the *Dvaya*, the word *S'rīmat* is an *upalakshaṇa** (an accidental sign by which the thing is distinguished and not a permanent attribute (or *vis'eshaṇa*), whereas in the latter part, the same word means a permanent attribute of Narayana. (If this were true, it would follow that the words 'I seek as my refuge' *s'araṇam prapadye* would apply only to Narayana and not to *S'rī* or Lakshmi who, in that part, according to them, is not meant to be taken as an inseparable attribute but as only an accidental mark to distinguish Narayana. Since in the latter part, *S'rīmat* is, according to them, an inseparable attribute (*vīs'eshaṇa*), it would follow that the dative and the *namah* would apply to the attribute and the substantive, *viz*, *S'rī* and Bhagavan. (It would then mean that Lakshmi is not to be sought as the *upāya* but that adoration and service are due to her as well as to her spouse, Narayana).

In this (wrong) view, when the same word *S'rīmat* is found in both the parts (of *Dvaya*) and when there is no objection to interpreting it in the same way, in both the places, the adoption of an interpretation which is at variance with the well-known view

* NOTE:— *Upalakshana*: In "That is Devadatta's field where the crane was sitting before", the crane is an *upalakshana* or accidental feature to identify the field with. It is not a permanent attribute or *viseshana* of the field.

35. Lakshmi Tantram: 28–14

of the ancient *āchāryas* and with the tradition connected with Nammalvar. the chief of all *prapannas* and which would give two different interpretations to the same word in the same sentence has no justification. For in the following *s'loka* it is said :— "O Lakshmi, with a face delightful like the moon! When (we) try to [36]study Thee as distinct from Bhagavan, (we feel) that His *svarūpa* or essential nature and His being the Ruler over all are the consequence of the greatness, which is His, by His being ever with Thee. Thou art, therefore, the part (or attribute) by which Bhagavan is understood as being of such and such a character. Since Thou and Bhagavan are thus (inseparably) united, the Veda does not speak of Thee separately".

It may be asked whether, if we take *S'rīmat* as an inseparable attribute of Narayana in the first part of the *Dvaya* also, it would not follow that there are two *upāyas* viz., Narayana and Lakshmi, and whether this would not be at variance with the texts which say that there is no other *upāya* than Bhagavan. We counter this objection by asking whether, if we take Lakshmi as the inseparable attribute, as you hold, in the second part of *Dvaya*, it would not follow that there are two objects of attainment, *namely*, Bhagavan and Lakshmi and whether this would not be at variance with the texts which say "There is no other interest or object of attainment than Bhagavan".

If it is now asked: "In that case what is the objection to taking the word *S'rīmat* as only an accidentally associated mark (*upalakshaṇa*) by which Bhagavan is distinguished in *both* the parts of the *Dvaya*, the answer is as follows :—Certain qualities, certain forms (*vigrahas*) and certain activities are necessary for Iswara being the *upāya*. Likewise certain other qualities, certain other forms and certain activities are ever associated with Iswara as the object of attainment. These necessary (things), also, would be at variance with Iswara being the *only upāya* and the *only* object of attainment respectively. So they, too, would have to be

36. Sri Gunaratnakosam: 28.

considered as accidental features and not inseparable attributes, but this would be against the view of these critics who hold that Iswara is the Protector or Saviour only in virtue of ( such attributes as) His omnipotence and His compassion. So they cannot concede that these qualities are only accidental features (*upalakshaṇa*)

They might argue that these qualities, forms and activities are inseparable attributes (*vis'eshaṇa*) and not accidental features (*upalakshaṇas*), because they are useful for the purpose of protection. We reply that the same may be said (with justice) of Lakshmi's relationship as spouse, both in the first part of the *Dvaya* and in the second part of the *Dvaya. (i. e.)* (She, too, is useful for the respective purposes). The respective uses of particular things or beings are in accordance with their nature and may be understood from the *pramāṇas* and from tradition. The use of a thing or of a being is determined, of course, by its nature.

The usefulness of this attribute *S'rī* in *S'rīmat*, both in the part dealing with *upāya* and in that which treats of the object to be attained by that *upāya* has been described by Nammalvar in the following verses :— " Lakshmi who[37] abides in the ever-fragrant lotus will destroy the *karma* of *jīvas* (*i.e.*) those *karmas* which act as hindrances to Bhagavan becoming the *upāya* " and " I will [38]sweep Thy temple with the help of Thy grace and that of Lakshmi who abides in the lotus." (So also) Bhagavan Valmiki declared in *The Rāmāyaṇa*, the earliest of all *kavyas*, which is the very essence of the doctrine of *s'araṇāgati* :— " This Sita [39]is capable of protecting us from the great danger (confronting us), O, Rakshasis" and " She [40]is capable of saving the host of Rakshasis from (the anger of Raghava)". Such authors as Hiranyagarbha and Kasyapa declared : " We should[41] meditate on Lakshmi, who can grant us all the benefits that we desire, who can take us safe out of the sea of *samsāra*, who becomes easily gracious and who

37. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-5-11
38. Tiruvoymozhi: 9-2-1
39. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 27-44
40. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 58-91
41. Kasyapa smriti

can make us happy." Sri Bhagavan Sounaka has given this precept:— "The man[42] that prays for the attainment of Bhagavan, who is the purport of all words, should perform *prapatti* to Lakshmi also." The great sage Parasara who received the knowledge concerning the truth about the Supreme Deity from boons granted to him by Vasishta and Pulastya has stated "Thou art, O Goddess[43], * the knowledge concerning the soul, the giver of *moksha*, the object of attainment." Even if, in this *s'loka*, the conferring of *moksha* be looked upon as an adjective qualifying the knowledge of the soul, it has to be considered as her glory or *vibhūti* on account of the appositional use (*sāmānādhi karaṇya*). The Lord of Sri has himself proclaimed in connection with the meditation on Bhagavan as the Lord of Sri in *S'rī Sātvata Samhitā* — "Those [43A] who meditate on Bhagavan seek the protection of Lakshmi and with that they easily cross the sea of *samsāra* which is constituted of these three qualities". Apart from the *s'āstras* treating specially of *S'rī*, these *sāstras* which do not pertain to any special sect or cult are of great authority.

Alavandar, too, has stated:— "The whole[44] world depends upon the glance of Sri, for its support." and again "Without[45] the grace of Lakshmi, the beloved spouse of the lotus-eyed Lord, we cannot have those glorious experiences which one might desire in this life (*samsāra*), nor the experience of our disembodied self, nor the enjoyment of Bhagavan in *moksha*". The author of *Sri Bhāshya*, in his *Vaikunta Gadya*, says that she commands[46] Adisesha, Vishvaksena and other attendants to render such service to Bhagavan as is suited to the time and the circumstance, and that the service to Bhagavan, which is the supreme goal, should be rendered in accordance with her commands. Koorathalvan,

* NOTE:— The sloka says: Thou art the knowledge concerning the self or *atma vidya;* Lakshmi is in apposition with *atma vidya.* The meaning is that *atma vidya* is one of her *vibhutis* or glorious possessions. Since *atma vidya* can confer *moksha,* it follows that Lakshmi can confer *moksha.*

42. Sounaka Samhita
43. Vishnu purana: 1-9-20
43A Sri Satvatam 12-84
44. Alavandar Stotram : 37
45. Alavandar. Chatussloki: 3
46. Vaikunta gadya:

too, sings his praise of Lakshmi in *slokas* beginning with these words :— "The [47]bounds of Thy greatness. O, Goddess, are not known to Bhagavan nor even to Thyself". These words are an elaboration of what is contained in the *sloka* :— "May Lakshmi [48]confer happiness (on us) — Lakshmi, looking at whose face, and with Her will as His aid, the Lord creates, destroys and sustains all the worlds, and grants also such things as *svargā*, *naraka* (hell) and *moksha*. Since the two are engaged in the same work and experience the same kind of delight, the Lord cannot feel happy if he performs the *līlā* of the work of the world without her participation in it." Bhattar, also, has commented on the word *Udāra* (generous) used in the *S'ruti* (*viz.*, *S'rī Sūktam*) as an adjective for Sri in this manner:—"How generous Thou [49] art! O, Mother, to the man who merely raises his hands folded in worship to Thee, Thou grantest wealth, the enjoyment of his disembodied self and even *parmapada* and yet Thou feelest ashamed that Thou hast not done anything adequate for him." Peria Jeer, too, has brought out all these ideas in his commentary on *S'rī Sūkta*. Thus, from what we find in the *S'ruti*, *Smriti* and *tradition*, (the reader) gifted with insight can understand that the attribute expressed in the word *S'rīmat* in *Dvaya* has its uses, just like such things as forms (*vigraha*), in accordance with its own nature.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS*:

You (critics who do not consider Lakshmi as an (inseparable) attribute or *vis'eshaṇa* of Narayana in the first part of *Dvaya*) maintain that such things as the qualities of the Saviour (compassion *etc*) are attributes and not mere *upalakshaṇa*, even though they cannot undertake the responsibility (*bhara*) of protection and cannot have the will to protect (being only qualities and therefore non-sentient). Why do you object to the idea of Lakshmi being the attribute (*vis'eshaṇa*) and Narayana being the substantive

47. Koorattalwar: Sristavam: 8
48. Koorattalwar: Sristavam: 1
49. Sri Gunaratnakosam: 58

(*vis'eshya*), when this divine couple have the same pleasure or relish in all actions and when they are both *s'eshis*, when there is the authority of the *s'āstras* for it? In such *vidyās* or forms of meditation as that of Pratardana, although the Supreme Being is the object of knowledge, we admit that sentient beings like Indra can be attributes of Bhagavan just like non-sentient qualities. Similarly in this *vidyā* called *prapatti*, the Omnipresent Lord is the object of approach with His Spouse and with such things as His qualities in accordance with what is stated in the respective *mantras.*

We have already stated that what is understood from the *pramāṇas* should not be set aside by mere logic or reason. Therefore, just as we accept *the Lord with His Spouse*, as the object of attainment in accordance with the wish of the Saviour, there is no objection to *the Lord with His Spouse* being the *upāya* as well.

Just as Bhagavan with particular qualities (like omnipotence and compassion) and particular forms (*vigraha*) indicated, respectively, by the words *Nārāyaṇa* and *charanau*, (the two feet) which are attributes of Narayana forms a single *upāya*, so also Bhagavan with Lakshmi, who appears in the word *S'rīmat* as an attribute in the eternal relationship of being His Spouse, may without any impropriety, be considered as a single *upāya*. If it is said that we should give up all the attributes of the *upāya* in order to make the *upāya* single, the *dharma* of being an *upāya* (*i.e. upāyatva*) will have to be given up also.

It should not be thought that the substantive (here Bhagavan), when it gains some excellence from the attribute (here Lakshmi), should be considered as previously wanting in some excellence. Well has it been said in the *s'loka* :— "Thou art, O [50]Lakshmi, the property of Bhagavan by Thine own will; hence, though His supreme excellence is due to Thee, His greatness is not dependent on any one else. A gem becomes valuable on account of its radiance. It does not thereby become in itself worthless; its

50. Srigunaratnakosa: 31

value, which is natural to it, does not diminish thereby, because its greatness is not due to anything else." In the same way as the substantive, (namely, Bhagavan) gains excellence from its attribute (*visēshaṇa*), namely, Lakshmi, the substantive, too, has its own natural excellence. This is illustrated in the *sloka* in the *Rāmāyaṇa*:— "Just[51] as radiance cannot be separated from the sun, I cannot remain separated from Raghava". Brightness is the natural quality common to radiance and the sun. So also Sri Rama and Sita had, in common, auspicious qualities not dependent on any one else, as described in the *sloka*:— "We bow to [52]Bhagavan and Lakshmi, who have in their very nature, all auspicious qualities, who are the causes of the world and who are beyond all comparison".

There is nothing improper in stating that the substantive and the attribute give excellence to each other as indicated in the following:— "That [53]splendour which is Sri Rama is beyond all measure, for the daughter of Janaka is His". "Though [54]she is always with Thee, Thy Lakshmi astonishes Thee every day as if she is new; she is in every way fit for Thee by her attributes, her forms, her sportful activity and her interest in protecting others". "Thy *Srī*"[54A] "Thou art[54B] the *Srī* of *Srī*" and "The Sri of even[54] Sri" — these expressions show how Sri and the Lord of Sri are excellent in themselves and add also to each other's greatness.

By the authority of texts in the *Sruti* (such as "He is the Lord of the Universe", "The Spouse of Vishnu who is the empress of the world", and "The syllable *ma* indicates that the *jīva* is the servant of both"), and by the authority of the following *sloka*, "The [55]world of sentient and non-sentient beings is *sesha* to Lakshmi, (*i.e.*) it exists for Lakshmi: She and the world are *sesha*

51. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda: 21–15
52. Lakshmi Kalyaṇam.
53. Ramayana Aranya Kanda: 37–18
54. Alavandar Stotram: 38
54A Tiruvoimozhi: 10–10–2
54B Srigunaratnakosa: 9
54C Peria Tirumozhi 7–7–1
55. Sattvatam.

to Bhagavan, who is Her *s'eshī*. Notwithstanding this, the control of the world is common to both: the two together are *seshī*, in relation to the world". By these authorities it was determined by Somasi Andan in *Shadarthasamkshepa*, that both form always a single *s'eshī*. In the case of certain special offerings (*havis*) enjoined in the *Karmakānda*, the offering is made to two deities like Agni and Vishnu as if they were single. So also in this offering of the soul called *prapatti*, the two may, without any impropriety, be the single recipient. As stated in the *s'loka*, "Youth [56] and certain other qualities are common to Thee and Bhagavan; however you have divided other qualities between you for your enjoyment and (that in this way):— Bhagavan has manly qualities like independence of others, control over enemies, firmness and the like and Thou hast such feminine qualities as gentleness, existing only for the husband, compassion and forbearance"; the wife is ever dependent on her Lord and in the performance of *yajnas* or sacrifices, only the *yajamāna* is spoken of (as his wife who participates in the performance is implicit, as it were, in the word *yajamāna*, even when *one yajamana* is referred to). So also in regard to the teaching of the *s'āstras*, the mention of a single person does not mean the absence of the wife who is, as it were, inseparable from her spouse. In the verse:— "*Bhakti* [57] and *prapatti* are forms of knowledge which have, for their object, only Bhagavan, the Lord of Lakshmi, who abides in the lotus and so also the knowledge called the perfect enjoyment of Brahman has only Him for its object" — in this verse this is really the meaning, *viz.*, that Lakshmi, being included in Bhagavan, no separate mention is made of her. This may be seen also in the passage: "Since Thou [58] and Bhagavan are thus inseparably united, the *s'ruti* does not speak of Thee separately".

Nanjeeyar heard, from Kadambi Achan, what the author of *Srī Bhashyam* had declared and summarised it thus:— " In places

56. Srigunaratnakosa: 34
57. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 67
58. Srigunaratnakosa: 28

where Bhagavan is referred to, it should be understood that Lakshmi is also referred to".

Those whose object is only *moksha* and who have no other aim or interest, worship Lakshmi in her situation as *laya* (on the chest of Bhagavan) and as *bhoga* in the image of the spouse standing by the image of Bhagavan. But just as we bow before certain images of Bhagavan (like Santanakrishna), which bestow primarily the benefits desired in this world, there is, for even *mumukshus*, no impropriety in such actions as bowing before the image of Lakshmi installed in a separate shrine and worshipped for certain worldly benefits (*adhikārārchā*), just as we should bow before our mothers, since in all images of Lakshmi (wherever they may be) her being the Spouse of Vishnu is an established fact.

When such authoritative doctrines are seen in the words of those who are disinterested, those who are still so obstinate as not to give up their wrong notions, are in a state described in the following *s'lokas*:— "The fool[59] who clings firmly to what he has learnt before, the man who is ignorant of *dharma*, the man who will not have his doubts cleared by those grown old in wisdom — this man will come to grief like a blind man falling into a ditch", and "To [60]those who are weak in intelligence, who are wicked, who have been bitten by the serpent of specious reasoning and whose senses have become deluded — to these men, truths appear different from what they (really) are".

In the investigation of the real meaning of the word *Siddhopāya*, the following passages should be remembered:— "There is [61]nothing other than these two. The males are Bhagavan and the females are Lakshmi". "Just as Vishnu[62] is in all things, so also is she, O, best of Brahmins,". "The heart of this lady is fixed on Sri Rama and his heart is ever fixed on her. Therefore it is that

59. Mahabharata Karna Parva 72-54.
60. Itihasa Samucchaya 33-108.
61. Vishnu purana 1-8-35.
62. Vishnupurana 1-8-17.
63. Ramayana: Sundara Kanda 15-52

she and Sri Rama who is the embodiment of *dharma* continue alive for even the fraction of an hour." "Both Bhagavan [64]and Lakshmi are omnipresent, since they are inseparably united, they are spoken of as one *tattva* or real." Therefore, since they form a single *s'eshī*, since they are ever of the same mind, since they are intimately attached to each other, and since they are inseparably connected with each other in their *svarūpa* or essential nature, and in their *rūpa* or forms, those who are established in *sattva* should understand the meaning of the word *Nārāyaṇa* with its adjective *S'rīmat* in such a manner as will not be at variance with the inseparable unity of the *tattvam* (Bhagavan) with its attribute (Sri) so well expressed in the *s'loka*:— "Thy [65]essential nature *svarūpa* and the forms that Thou takest and the *svarūpa* and the forms assumed by Bhagavan are in close embrace with each other."

(The author summarises the gist of the chapter in a number of *s'lokas* as follows:—)

The Lord of Sri, who is the embodiment of compassion and who secures, for them, all the benefits desired by men is called *Siddhopāya*, because He is already an existent *upāya*. The ways of securing His favour are such as *bhakti* and *prapatti* and these are called *sadhyopāyas*, because they can be adopted and accomplished by those who desire the respective benefits. When the *Sādhyopāya* flows with high mounting waves and increases the flood of compassion of the *s'eshī*, who is the *siddhopāya*, the latter breaks through the flood of *līlā* which is also His. By (that very flood of compassion) all hindrances to His service, such as even the former will of the Omnipotent, disappear like dams built of fine sand. Though the acts of propitiation (like *bhakti* and *prapatti*) are prescribed in the *s'āstras* for securing the fruit, yet *Siddhopāya* is considered as of prime importance, because the Lord alone is capable of granting *moksha*, since *bhakti* or *prapatti* being non-sentient, cannot give the fruit directly and

64. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 4-78. 65. Chatussloki: 4

since Bhagavan alone can act directly. To those who have adopted *prapatti* as the primary and independent means, it is specially ordained that they should rest on the Omnipresent in order that they may know that their own endeavour perishes instantly after *prapatti*. Therefore with what aim, the surrender of responsibility has been made to *Siddhopāya* — for that aim, the man should make no further endeavour and depend only on the *S'iddhopāya*. In the definition of *prapatti* in the *mantra* for *prapatti*, in the injunction concerning it and in other passages and so also in *S'rī Bhāshya* and the like and by tradition, Brahman is declared as the *upāya*. Just as we admit that certain ( holy ) places and the like which exist already are called *dharma* productive of spiritual excellence, so also it is said by those who understand the truth that Srī Krishna is the eternal *dharma* ( or *upāya* ). This *Siddhopaya* is to be thought of in the three mysteries or *mantrās* in such as the syllable *a* in *aum* etc.

*TAMIL VERSE*:

Narayana, with His Spouse Lakshmi, who is staunch in being every kind of relation ( to us ), who is the sea of compassion that dispels ignorance (and delusion ), who shines sustaining all (things and all beings ) with His mere will, being the Supreme Lord without a second and who takes compassion on us on account of ( Sri ), the nectar born of sweet nectar — Narayana with Sri is the firm refuge of all who seek His protection having no other support.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

The treasure ( of gold - *viz.* Bhagavan ), which is not seen even now by those who perceive only what is outside and not what is within them, because they are guided by heretical systems which have not the benefit of the traditional knowledge of our spiritual teachers — ( the treasure which they fail to perceive ) even though resting on it night and day (as in *sushupti*) — the treasure which is proclaimed in the *s'rutis* to be itself the means or *sādhana* for its attainment — that boundless treasure will make its presence (felt) among those who are pure of mind.

# (24) THE CHAPTER ON THE CLARIFICATION OF WHAT IS MEANT BY SADHYOPAYA OR THE UPAYA THAT HAS TO BE ADOPTED.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

It appears to us, from the *s'rutis, smritis* and the words of *gurus* fortified by reason, that the Omnipotent Lord being propitiated by *yajnas* (sacrifices), gifts made in charity, offerings made in the fire (*homa*), adoration, surrender of reponsibility (*bharanyāsa*), constant meditation (*bhakti yoga*) and the like in accordance with one's competence confers benefits on men. This is also what religious tradition prescribes.

### *THE NEED FOR THE CLARIFICATION OF WHAT IS MEANT BY SĀDHYOPĀYA:*

A man may have a clear knowledge of *Siddhopāya* (*viz.* Bhagavan) who is omniscient, omnipotent and supremely compassionate, who, along with His Spouse, is the *s'eshī* of all and the Saviour of the whole world; he may even have become perfect in his averseness to *samsāra* by seeing that what is considered agreeable by unintelligent persons is really disagreeable as stated in the *s'loka:* "Health[1] gives (only) potency to the senses; wealth (only) creates enemies; long life makes one suffer bereavement of relations, What is there in these things that can delight a man?", He may have acquired an eager longing for the attainment of the Supreme Being as stated in the *s'loka*:— "He who[2] loves Bhagavan, the Supreme Being, has no love for anything else"; he may have the feeling of urgency in regard to *moksha* as stated in the *s'loka*:— "By paying[3] a heavy price in the from of virtuous deeds, this boat of a body has been bought. Before this boat is broken (or becomes leaky), hasten to cross the sea of sorrow". In spite

1.

2. Barhaspatyasmriti:

3. Varahapurana:

of all these, if he does not clearly understand (all) about the *sadhyopāya*, prescribed in the injunction, "Seek refuge under me alone" and in the sentence which expresses the action, "I seek refuge" (in *Dvaya*), which is the means of extinguishing the punishment inflicted by Bhagavan which binds a man to *samsāra* and which resulted from beginningless and continued violation of His commands — if he does not understand it, there is no way of propitiating and winning the grace of the Supreme Ruler, who is the *Siddhopāya*. Therefore we will remove misconceptions that might arise concerning (1) competence therefor (2) the nature of *sadhyopāya* and (3) the accessories pertaining to it.

*COMPETENCE: PRAPATTI IS OPEN TO ALL (CASTES):*

1. There are some who will ask:—"This *prapatti* is a *dharma* prescribed in the *Vedas*. If so, how can it be said that every one (of all castes) is qualified to perform it?" The answer to this question is given on the authority of the *Svetāsvatara S'ruti*, which says that the Supreme Ruler is the Saviour of *all*. This truth is confirmed by expository passages like the following:– "Take [4]me to Raghava who is the Protector of all the worlds", and in *s'lokas* like:— "You should[5] seek the protection of Vishnu who is fit to be approached by every one, who is easy of approach, who can never go wrong and has no one to compare with Him and who removes the suffering of those who perform *prapatti*". It is confirmed also by passages in the *Sātvatasamhitā* (2.9), which says that all the three castes beginning with the Kshatriyas and ending with the Sudras who have performed *prapatti*, are competent to adore the four *vyūhas*, without *mantras*. So also is it confirmed by the *s'loka* in *Sanatkumāra Samhitā* which says:— "The man born even into low castes who has performed *prapatti* once to Bhagavan — that man is protected by Bhagavan from the ills of *samsāra* even though he is a patricide or a matricide"

4. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda: 17–15
5.

It is true that *upāsana* or meditation (in accordance with the teaching of the *Upanishads*) has been determined as fit (only) for the three higher castes in the section [6]*Apas'ūdra*; but speaking the truth which is given as an injunction in the *Vedas* is enjoined for all castes; so also *prapatti* is a *dharma* common to all and may be performed either with *Vedic mantras* or with *mantras* found in the *Tantras* in accordance with the person's respective competence, without any violation of propriety. We have heard, in the *s'āstras*, of even such beings as crows performing *prapatti*. The Saviour Himself has declared: "Women,[7] Vaisyas and Sudras that are born of sinners — whoever they might be — they attain, O Partha, the highest state if they seek my protection". Here seeking of the Lord for protection by *bhakti* or *prapatti* is stated to be common to all. Even in the matter of *upāsana* or meditation (according to the *vidyās* in the Upanishads) though the beginning can be made only by men in the three higher castes, the end of the course can be attained by men in the bodies of any caste. This is stated in *Vishnudharma* in the following *s'loka*:—"Though *Dharmavyādha*[8] and others belonged to low and gruesome castes, yet since, in their previous births, they had practised *bkaktiyoga*, they continued it in their latest life and, having completed it therein, attained their goal like *Sramani."

* NOTE: (Sabari) or Sramani was of the caste of hunters and attained *mukti* by *bhakti* to Bhagavatas and Bhagavan.

Thus *upāsana* or *bhakti* yoga should be *commenced* only by the three higher castes But there is no such restriction in the general statement about the competence for *prapatti*. Further in the special statement about the qualifications for *prapatti*, it is definitely declared that every one is fit to adopt *prapatti*. The special qualifications requisite for *prapatti* have already been described by us.

Therefore birth in the three higher castes or the absence of it is no competence for *prapatti*, when unaccompanied by the

6. Sri Bhashya: 1-3-9
7. Bhagavad Gita: 9-32.
8. Vishnu Dharma: 10-2-29.

inability to adopt other *upāyas*. (The only qualification that is essential is *ākinchanya*, inability to adopt other *upāyas*). This may be seen from the Tamil verse: "I was [9]not born into any of the four castes to enable me to perform *dharma*", and from the *s'loka*: "O Thou [10]Saviour! I was born into a family renowned in the world for their fame, their purity, their practice of *yoga*, their knowledge of the truth concerning matter (*prakriti*) with its three qualities and the *jīvas* and for their steadfast attachment to Thy lotus-like feet, and yet with a mind inclined to sin, I am sunk in *samsāra* and am going down." Therefore it is beyond doubt that competence for *prapatti* is open to persons of all castes who have a knowledge of the Saviour and of *s'aranāgati* and possess also *ākinchanya* and the like.

### *MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OR SVARUPA OF PRAPATTI:*

2. The statement of learned men that the *s'aranāgati* referred to in *Dvaya* means only faith in the two feet of Narayana being the only *upāya* for the attainment of Narayana with His Spouse — this statement should be taken to mean only that faith in *s'aranāgati* in the mind of the person and faith as an accessory to *prapatti* are very important. (It does not mean that faith alone is enough). So also the words of the author of Sri *Bhāshya*:—"*Prapatti* is faith; it is prayer accompanied by a faith that Bhagavan will grant whatever is desired on account of a single act of prayer" — these words of the *Bhāshyakāra* emphasise the importance of faith at the beginning and then declare in the words of Bharatamunī which define *prapatti* that *prapatti* is a prayer (for help) with faith (in the person whose help is sought). (It has been shown already that) surrender of self is the *angī* and that the others (like *kārpanya*) are *angas* (*i e.*) accessories. "*Nyāsa* has[10A] been declared as having five accessories or *angas*." Therefore these words of the Bhashyakara that *prapatti* consists in prayer (for help) which might mean

9. Tirucchanda Viruttam: 90.
10. Alavandar: Stotram: 61.
10A Lakshmi Tantram: 17–74.

that the Lord expects *only* the prayer for help should be understood only as emphasising the importance of one of the *angas* (namely, the seeking of the Lord's protection), for it is said "The [10B] Lord expects the expression of the desire for protection". This is only *one* of the *angas* (and not the *angī*). (The Bhashyakara should not be taken as stating that the prayer alone will do). In the shorter *gadya* also (*S'rirangagadya*), Sri Ramanuja makes the prayer with faith preceding it and concludes with the words *namostu te* (*i.e.*) "I bow to Thee". Further he uses the word *s'araṇam* which means seeking (the Lord) as *upāya*. From these two, it is evident that self-surrender is present. That the word *namas* in *namostute* means surrender of self is well-known from such passages as the following :— "I bow[11] to Bhagavan to whom, having surrendered his self which is what is meant by *namaskāra*, a man gets rid of his suffering and enjoys whatever he desires." In *S'rī Vaikunṭa Gadya* the surrender of self preceded by prayer is explicit. Therefore (since Sri Ramanuja states in *Vaikunṭa - gadya*: "Praying (for protection), the person should surrender his (or her) self to Bhagavan after bowing to Him,") it is clear that surrender of self is different from the prayer for protection and is the *angī* with the prayer as an *anga*. It has therefore to be concluded that in the words: "One should[12] surrender one's self by uttering this *mantra*", and "the surrender[13] of one's self and of what belongs to one's self", the *angī* which is surrender of self, is declared as a *vidhi* or injunction.

If this were not accepted (as true), it would lead to construing the sentence "*S'araṇāgati* is of [13A] six kinds" in its apparent meaning and thinking that the five accessories or *angas* of *prapatti* are, every one of them, a form of *prapatti* or *angī*, in the same way as we conclude that there are seven different kinds of ablution (*snāna*) from the sentence :— "Ablution[13B] is said to be of seven kinds".

10B Lakshmi Tantram: (17–78)
11. Mantrarajapada stotram:
12. Satvata Tantram:
13. Lakshmi Tantram: 17–79
13A Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37–2–28
13B Bodhayanagrıhya Sutra: 2–7

If it is argued that the *angas* are not considered to be *angīs* on account of the statement: "One [13C]should perform *prapatti* with its five *angas* or accessories," then by the force of the same argument and in accordance with the statement "*Nyāsa* is [13D]accompanied by five *angas*", we should, in reason, correct such statements as "*Prapatti* is prayer" and "*Prapatti* is faith", and hold that "*Nikshepa* or surrender is the *angī*", and that the rest are (only) *angas*.

Even if we judge by the principle that, (when there is a difference in the statements), that statement which is made in a larger number of contexts should be accepted as true, it would be evident, from a study of the chapters on *Prapatti* in *Sātvika Tantra*, *Lakshmī Tantra*, *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā*, and the like, that *Nikshepa* or self-surrender is the *angī*. Even in the *sloka* :—" Thou[13E] [14]alone, shouldst be my *upāya* It is this idea of prayer that is called *saranagati*", it is indicated by suggestion in the word *upāya* coming along with the word '*alone*' that what is referred to is *bharanyāsa* or surrender of responsibility which is the main theme in that context. Even in ordinary life, an accessory is often spoken of as if it were the main thing in order to emphasise some one aspect or other. The word *ālambha*, which means 'killing' is employed to mean also '*yāga* or sacrifice' in a wider sense; so also in "seek refuge" in the *Charama sloka* and the like, the verbs signify the sacrifice of the self or *ātma yāga*, which is usually expressed by such words as *nyāsa*, *nikshepa* and *tyāga* (surrender). This is in keeping with Vedic usage.

What is called *Yāga* is a special form of thought indicating that a particular offering (*havis*) is made to a particular deity. *Ātmayāga* or the sacrifice (or surrender of self) is (likewise) a special form of thought indicating this: " My soul, which is the most delicious of offerings (*havis*), is for Sriman Narayana. We

13C. Lakshmi Tantra 23-11-7
13D. do 17-74
13E. Ahirbudhnya Samhita 37-31

have already stated (on page 137) that in this surrender of self, the nature of the action to be performed which is common to all who desire benefits of whatever kind is the surrender of the responsibility for protection.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS:*

Here in the surrender of self for the sake of *moksha*, since there is to be made an offering (*havis*), owing to the injunction regarding the manner in which the offering should be made, there is an additional feature for the man who is destitute of other *upāyas*, namely, the surrender of the responsibility for the protection of the self. Therefore by such authors as Rama Misra (Uyyakkondar) and others, when they want to speak of the surrender of responsibility (*bharanyāsa*), a single aspect of it, namely, the abstention from his own activity on the part of the *prapanna* has been used to indicate *prapattī*. As in the world of ordinary life, when the surrender of responsibility has not been made, abstention from one's own activity will not result thereafter merely from the request for protection. He who sees the subtle feature that is common to these three, namely, being destitute of all *upāyas* for protection, surrender of responsibility and the prayer for being the *upāya* — he alone sees. (That subtle feature which is common to all the three of them is refraining from all activity of one's own for one's protection. Since there is this common feature in all the three, the other two are sometimes used to denote *bharanyāsa*).

Thus the surrender of one's responsibility for the protection of one's self is the main injunction that is made in all *s'āstras* treating of *prapatti* and it has five accessories. (Such eminent authorities) as Sri Vishnuchitta, Vadihamsambuvaha, and Varadacharya have succinctly stated (this truth).

## *THE KNOWLEDGE THAT ONE IS SESHA TO THE LORD IS NOT IN ITSELF PRAPATTI:*

3. There are some who say:—"When a man has understood the truth regarding the *tattvas* from the *s'āstras*, has he not realised his relationship as *sesha* to Bhagavan? Further, in

the *sloka*,"If you desire to[14] attain the highest state and to adopt the *upāya* for it, remember that Hari is (your) master and that you are His servant and that this relationship exists for ever by the very nature (of things), (in this *sloka*) — is not the meaning as follows :— "If you desire the highest goal of life and the means of attaining it, you should understand clearly that you are the servant and that Iswara is the master and that this relationship exists by nature"? They ask "When this is so, is there an action (besides the thought of the relationship) enjoined called *ātmasamarpaṇam*". This question does not deserve any consideration, just like the dictum (of the *Advaitins*) that, by the mere knowledge of the text of the **sruti*, *moksha* can be attained.

*** NOTE:— Texts like "That Thou art" and "I am Brahman".**

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS :*

To the man who prides himself on having stolen from Bhagavan the gem Kaustubha (which is the symbol of his soul) and who is the prince of all sinners (*i.e.* the greatest of all sinners) the surrender of responsibility (*bharanyāsa*) (to the Lord) has been enjoined as an expiation. The thought that he is the *sesha* of the Supreme Being, which qualifies the *prapanna*, serves also to prevent the theft of the soul (*ātmāpahāra*) in the future (*i.e.*) after *prapatti*.

The man first understands from the *sāstras* that his self which is a Real (*Tattva*) has the attribute of being a *sesha*. Then with this competency and with the accessories pertaining (to *prapatti*) and also with the specific idea of the particular benefit desired, he surrenders the responsibility for the protection of his soul (to Bhagavan) bearing in mind his relationship as a *sesha*. This surrender of responsibility which is enjoined as an *upāya* for the remission of the punishment resulting from endless sins is indeed what is called *ātmasamarpaṇa* (the surrender of the self).

14. Vishnu Tattva:

When it is said that *moksha* is attained by a knowledge of the truth, it should be understood as meaning that it is only by way of leading to the adoption of an *upaya*. This is evident from the authority of the injunction (*vidhi*) contained in such passages as "worship[15] me" and "seek [16]refuge under me".

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

The instruction which states:— "From knowledge arises *moksha*", should be understood in one of two ways:—"*Bhakti* preceeded by *jnāna* or knowledge leads to *moksha* or from *jnāna* or knowledge, which is of the nature of *bhakti*, results *moksha* (for *bhakti* is itself a form of knowledge).

Similarly the knowledge of the relationship of being a *s'esha* to the Lord which arises from a study of the *s'āstra* is common to all forms of activity for *moksha*, by refraining from the worldy life, like *bharanyāsa* and *upāsana* or *bhakti*. Since the activity of the *s'esha*, namely, service, is the extreme limit of the goal of attainment, it is certainly not possible to adopt any of the *upāyas* enjoined for *moksha*, without understanding the relationship of *s'esha* to the Lord Even if a man adopts the *dharmas* enjoined for the attainment of *moksha* without knowing this relationship of being a *s'esha*, these *dharmas* or *upāyas* themselves will (in course of time) produce that knowledge of the relationship and will become the cause of *moksha* by making the adoption of the *upāya* perfect and complete. So the *ātmasamarpaṇam* that is enjoined for performance is not the mere knowledge of the relationship of being a *s'esha*; if it is asked what, then, it is, the answer is that it is the surrender of the responsibility for one's protection accompanied by such things as the knowledge of the relationship of being a *s'esha*.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA.*

The contention that the particular kind of knowledge called *prapatti* results merely from the sentences or passages of the

15. Bhagavad gita: 9-33 16. Bhagavad gita: 18-66

*s'āstra*, that it is, on that account, called *siddhopāya* and that it is not an *upāya* to be accomplished by a certain activity — this contention also is refuted by the injunction or *vidhi* (*s'araṇam vraja*).

If it is argued that *s'araṇam vraja* "seek protection" merely means "Know this truth (that the Lord is the Saviour)", the answer is that it is opposed to the natural and obvious meaning of the words. It would also be against the plain and explicit rules or *vidhis* for the performance of *prapatti* as in the sentence :— "*Perform this prapatti* accompanied by its five accessories or *angas*." If it is held that what is intended in the *Charama s'loka* is merely this, that Iswara is the *upāya* for *moksha* and that no activity is enjoined in this *s'loka* for the man who wants *moksha*, it would mean that it is merely the teaching of a truth that is needed for *bhakti yoga*, which is the subject treated in that context. (The *Charama s'loka* would then cease to have anything to do with *prapatti* ).

## *REFRAINING FROM ONE'S OWN ACTIVITY IS NOT IN ITSELF PRAPATTI :*

There are some who hold that *prapatti* is merely refraining from one's own activity for protecting one self and that what is enjoined for its accomplishment is only the abandonment of all *dharmas* or *upāyas*. The answer to this view is as follows :—Even though it is abstention, this abandonment of all *dharmas* is itself an activity or *dharma* of the person for his own protection (and this would be inconsistent with their own words). Further this view is in conflict also with the passage (quoted above) enjoining the performance of *prapatti* with its five *angās*.

The view held by some that the regarding of *prapatti* as an *upāya* or as an auxiliary to *Siddhopāya* (for *moksha*) is opposed to the doctrine that the *Siddhopāya*, namely, Iswara, is the only *upāya*, that He is already an existent *upāya*, that He is the Supreme Sentient, that He has supreme compassion, and omnipotence and that He is independent of all others — this view is at variance

with the *s'rutis* and the *smritis*. It is not based on any general proposition (such as :— "Wherever an auxiliary condition is required, there cannot be a single *upāya*" and "Where an accessory is required, there is no independent doership"). Since there are these objections and others, this view is based on fallacious reasoning. If it were considered sound reasoning, it would mean that, even in *upāsana*, whatever is accepted as auxiliary should be rejected as unnecessary.

If it were further argued that even *upāsana* is not a means or *upāya*, it would be inconsistent with what has been stated else-where by those who hold this view. for while commenting on the passage, "Having given up all *dharmas*, seek refuge under me", they interpret the word *dhārma* as *upāsana* or *upāya* for the attainment of *moksha* If they contend that in order to remove Arjuna's haughtiness, Sri Krishna prescribes unnecessary burdens and uses the word *dharma* to mean what Arjuna, *in his delusion* or inability to understand the real purport of the teaching, considers as necessary *upāyas* in the phrase "all *dharmas*", (the answer is as follows):—It is stated (in *Yāgnyavalkya Smriti* 1-8):—"The adoration of the Lord, personal purity, control of the senses, non-violence, giving in charity, repeating the Vedas, other Vedic rites — among all these, having a vision of the Supreme Being by *karma yoga jnāna yoga* and *bhakti yoga* is the highest *dharma*". Again it is said — "Among all *dharmas*, the *dharma*[16] which consists in the adoration of Vishnu is the highest, for He protects His devotee as if he were His own body": and further, "There is no other *karma*[17] enjoined in the *Vedas* for the expiation of sins than the adoration of Vishnu". If these well-known *dharmas* which are described as supreme and which are activities for *moksha* of the nature of abstention from worldly action, are stated to be no *dharmas*, much more so would the *dharmas* prescribed for worldly ends cease to be *dharmas*, and none of the *s'āstras* would carry

16. Mahabharata: Anusasanikaparva: 36-24

17. Vyasa Smriti:

any authority or weight. Those who hold these views would then line up with atheists and heretics.

It may be asked: ( The words in the *Gītā* are): "Give up all *dharmas*". In order that the meaning of the word *all* may not be contracted or reduced in application, since the seeking of the Lord's protection is also denoted by the word *dharma* just like *upāsanas*, should it not also be given up, in as much as it is also an *upāya* or *sādhana*? Similarly to consider *prapatti* as a *sādhana* or *upāya* or an auxiliary condition is at variance with the words in the *Gītā*: "Give up all *dharmas* or *upāyas*." We ask in reply :— "( What do you really mean ? ) If you mean that we should adopt the *upāya* giving up the thought that it will directly and by itself lead to the end in view, it applies also equally to *bhakti yoga*. If it is meant that we should give up the thought of *prapatti* being a *dharma* even for winning the grace of the Lord, we answer, "In that case, you will have to give up even the thought that *Siddhopāya*, namely, "Sri Krishna, is the eternal *dharma*[18] or *upāya* ", in order that the meaning of *all* in *all dharmas* may not suffer reduction of application.

If it is argued that what are to be abandoned are *all dharmas* other than the one described in this passage — ( namely, the *Charama s'loka* ), the same answer might be given in support of the performance of *s'araṇāgati* which is prescribed in this very passage: ( *s'araṇam vraja* ).

A further doubt might arise as follows :— "*Upāsanas*, as *upāyas*, require that they should be originated or started; *upāsanas* have to be promoted to higher and higher perfection; *upāsanas* require the fulfilment of auxiliary conditions — Not so, this *upāya*, namely Bhagavan. He does not require to be originated or increased in intensity nor does He require any auxiliary help or means of approach. He is eternal, has neither growth nor decay and has always such qualities as full and perfect compassion which

18. Mahabharata: Aranya Parva: 71-123.

are of His very nature. Without any means of approach, He is ever existent as an *upāya* and is of irresistible might : Of what use, then, are *bhakti* and *prapatti* in His case ?" The answer is that they help to obtain remission of the punishment which is the cause of *samsāra* and which has been inflicted for beginningless and successive acts of offence. When these *upāyas* are adopted for other benefits (than *moksha*) (for instance, *svarga*), they generate favourable dispositions (in the Lord) suited to the attainment of the respective benefits, just like Jyotishtoma and the like and thus serve as aids. In the case of the man who desires *moksha*, they, as *vyāja* or *sādhyopāya*, cause appeasement in *Siddhopāya* so as to cancel the punishment and then to remove the contraction of knowledge and the like due to that punishment, so that *Siddhopāya* or the Lord confers (on the person) benefits extending up to perfect service. It is in this way these *upāyas* help as long as the self lasts.

Therefore those *pramāṇas* or authoritative passages which state that *Siddhopāya* (the Lord) confers the ultimate goal of perfect service (*kainkarya*) along with preliminary benefits after removing all undesirable hindrances and that *sādhyopāya* (*bhakti* and *prapatti*) leads to these benefits by propitiating *Siddhopāya* — these *pramāṇas* are both apposite and agree with one another very well.

### *IS THERE ANY NEED FOR THE S'ĀSTRA ENJOINING PRAPATTI ?*

4. Notwithstanding all this, some may ask : "Why should the *s'āstra* enjoin this *upāya* called *prapatti* ? (The *s'āstra* has to help only when man cannot find out things for himself with his common sense or reason). In ordinary life, when a man is about to sink (into ruin) because he cannot protect himself, he seeks the protection of some one who happens to be by his side and who has the ability to protect him. In the same way, if a man has understood himself and Iswara from the *s'āstra* which treats of the existent *upāya*, will he not seek Iswara for protection, of his own

accord, ( without the *s'āstra* enjoining it )? So there is no propriety in the *s'astra* prescribing *prapatti* in the place of *bhakti.*

This question is based on appropriate reasoning but proceeds too far. This is how it goes too far. In ordinary life (in the world) when a man seeks the help of another, he tries to learn before-hand in what way he should approach the other, so that the latter may take pity on him and then he seeks his protection. Similarly we should know who is competent to seek Iswara's protection and in what manner he should do so, so that the Lord may protect him ; there is no *pramāṇa* or authority other than the *s'āstra* which deals with what should be done and which can tell us how we should proceed to seek His help. It cannot be maintained that, by means of inference (or *anumāna* ), we can understand that the Lord will protect if we seek refuge under Him and then seek His protection. For in that case, every one who has a knowledge of the truth concerning Iswara may adopt the means in the manner suggested by his own inference and the texts in the *s'āstra* which prescribe *upāsana* (*bhakti*) would then become useless. The distinction that he who is capable should adopt *upāsana* and the like and that he who is not capable of them should resort to *prapatti* — this distinction cannot be established by means of inference ( *anumāna* ). If the *s'āstra* does not enjoin the performance of *prapatti* in the place of other *upāyas* to those who are incapable of them, they will have to lose the fruit of these other *upāyas* as they are not competent enough for their proper performance. This is how it stands. Though in ordinary life (in the world ), we see service to kings and the like conferring certain benefits, yet we hold that in regard to the weaving of garlands, the lighting of lamps, the singing of hymns, the act of prostrating, and so on ( in temples ), if these things are done without any reference to the *s'āstras* ( as to how they should be done ), they will become offences. The worship of Bhagavan and His service have to be done with the right accessories as laid down in the *s'āstras* and the fruits arising therefrom have also to be understood only from the *s'āstras.* In the same way, although we see instances of *prapatti*

in worldly life and the benefits arising therefrom, yet we can understand only from the *s'āstras* the relationship of cause and effect that exists between *prapatti* performed with particular *mantras* and in accordance with the instructions of the good *āchārya* and certain special benefits which would result therefrom. Just as certain special forms of worship and service are prescribed for certain special benefits, *prapatti*, too, has been enjoined. If it were otherwise, no rules would have to be prescribed for the service of Bhagavan, in the same way as there are none for the service of the king. It would lead to the wrong view that, for *prapatti* also, the initiation into *mantras* with the instructions of good *āchāryas* is unnecessary. That even those who are not competent for the utterance of *mantras* may perform *prapatti* to the Saviour who has certain specific attributes and that certain specific benefits will be derived therefrom, provided it is performed in the proper way without anything wanting and without any undue excess — this cannot be determined by any sound inference. Therefore just as particular forms of worship and service to Bhagavan are enjoined (in the *s'āstras*) with certain accessories, there is nothing inappropriate in the *s'āstra* prescribing the performance of *prapatti* with certain accessories (*angas*).

## *THE VIEW THAT UPĀSANA OR BHAKTI IS INCONSISTENT WITH ONE'S ESSENTIAL NATURE IS WRONG:*

5. There are some who maintain that even among these *upāyas* which are enjoined by the *s'āstras*, *upāsanas* are opposed to the essential nature (of the *jiva*). This should be taken to mean only a desire to praise *prapatti* with emphasis on it and not to condemn *upāsanas* (as being against one's nature). The reasons are as follows :—

(a) It cannot be said that they are against the essential nature of the *jīva* on the ground that they would destroy the self, for the self is eternal (and cannot be destroyed).

(b) It cannot be stated that the self or soul is, in its essential nature (*svarūpa*), incapable, as the Sankhya says, of being a doer, and is therefore incapable, by its very nature, of performing *upāsanas*. For the self is a doer in *bhakti* (or *upāsanas*) and the like as in the performance of *prapatti*, and in rendering service (to Bhagavan and to Bhagavatas). As stated in the *Brahma Sūtras*: "The [19] Self is a doer (capable of endeavour or effort); otherwise the *s'āstras* which enjoin doing certain things and refraining from certain other things would have no purpose or aim", and again, "This [20] doership of the self is dependent on Brahman" — As stated in these passages, the self is a doer capable of endeavour, though his being a doer is dependent on Bhagavan. If it is maintained that the self is absolutely incapable of action, it would follow that, since purposeful action is the sign or mark of the existence of a thing, the self is void or non-existent. If it is held that the self merely exists and is without *jnāna* (or knowledge), without the desire to act, and without the endeavour or effort needed for action, it would follow that it is incapable also of enjoyment (*boktritvam*). This would mean that *samsāra* is illusory and that there is no need for any *upāya* for the attainment of *moksha*. The *sloka* "Lakshmi[21] comes of her own accord to a man who makes no endeavour. Another man does not obtain even food, hard though he works. This is also due to past *karma*" — this *s'loka* should not be interpreted as stating that the *upāyas* prescribed in the *s'āstras* are all of no use. It only emphasises that certain benefits come to a man as a result of certain actions performed in previous (births).

(c) Nor can it be maintained that *upāsanas* are, according to *s'āstras*, against the essential nature of the *jīva*, because they would bring evil consequences. For, unlike actions performed out of the desire for worldly gains (*kāmya*) and actions prohibited

19. Brahma Sutras: 2-3-33
20. Brahma Sutras: 2-3-40
21. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 339-15

in the *s'āstras* (*nishiddha*), which are obstacles to *moksha* and which arise from desire (*rāga*) and the like, *upāsanas* cannot bind the soul to *samsāra*, because they are not performed out of a desire for worldly gains and because they are enjoined in the *s'āstras* only for those who want *moksha*.

Thus *upāsanas* cannot destroy the essential nature of the self, they are not impossible of performance nor do they bring evil consequences; there is, therefore, no justification for their being considered to be at variance with the essential nature (of the self).

(d) Again it may be argued that since the self is different from such things as the body, there is no propriety in the man who knows that, in his essential nature as the self, there is no such thing as *varṇa* or *ās'rama*, performing the duties and rites (*dharmas*) and other *upāyas* which are connected with them, because they all arise from the (erroneous) notion. "I am a Brahmin, I am a Kshatriya." (It may be argued) on this ground that these rites and duties (*dharmas*) which are dependent on one's caste (*varṇa*) and *ās'rama* may justly be considered as being against the essential nature of the self. This argument, too, is not sound for the following reason:— Even if he understands that, in its essential nature, the self is not Brahmin and the like, yet since he is, owing to certain forms of past *karma*, in close association with the body which has the attributes of Brahmin and the like, he should not give up the *dharmas* enjoined by the *s'āstras* in accordance with his *varṇa* and *ās'rama* and also in accordance with his capacity for getting rid of the ills of life and for attaining good things, as long as he is with that body, in the same way as he makes endeavours to ward off such things as hunger and thirst which arise from that association with the body. Therefore it cannot be maintained that these *dharmas* should be given up on the ground that they are against the essential nature of the soul because the body is different from the soul to (the man endowed with discrimination.) In regard to the performance of these

*dharmas*, it is not the delusion that the essential nature of the self has Brahminness and the like which gives competence, but the association with the body which has such attributes as Brahminness. Therefore we do not see any conflict between *upāsanas* and the essential nature of the self on account of the intelligent discrimination between the body and the soul which is necessary for the performance of all *dharma*. That *upāsanas* have within them the notion of "I" (*ahamkāra*) finds no authority or sanction in the *s'āstras*, but was merely assumed by these critics to exist. (In the performance of *karma yoga*, we are enjoined to give up the notion that we are free agents and that we want certain benefits ).

(e) Some say that since *karma yoga* and the like have to be performed with the help of the body and the senses which are adventitious (*upādhi*) and which were acquired as the result of past *karma*, they are against the essential nature of the self. To them we reply that, even for a knowledge of one's essential nature and for learning *Dvaya* and the like, there is need for such things as the mind. (So they would have to say that knowledge of the essential nature and learning *Dvaya* are against the essential nature.) Thus their objection would extend to the latter also.

### *THE OBJECTION THAT THE JĪVA WHO IS ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON THE LORD CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT ADOPT AN UPĀYA.*

(f) It might be asked, "Whatever that might be, since the *jīva* exists solely for Iswara (*s'esha*), he is *not expected* to protect himself and since he is absolutely subject to the will and control of Iswara, he *cannot* protect himself; is it proper then to prescribe a means or *upāya* as necessary to be adopted by him for his protection and to call this an *upāya* that is capable of being adopted by him? When this is so, *bhakti yoga* and the like are productive of evil to the essential nature of the self (*svarūpa*), as they are inconsistent with his being a *s'esha* who exists only for Iswara and are not possible of adoption, as they are inconsistent

with his being absolutely under the will and control of Iswara". This objection has already been answered as leading to the logical conclusion of the possibility of salvation for all. If the Lord were to grant a *jīva mukti* or salvation without any consideration (*vyāja*) whatsoever, the *jīva* should be a *mukti* from beginningless time. If it is held that Iswara, being independent and omnipotent, makes a man a *mukta* whenever He is pleased, it would mean that he is partial to some and cruel to others. Similar heresies would follow: Further those *s'āstras* which prescribe the means for attaining *mukti* would become meaningless. Therefore in adopting this means enjoined as the result of the *jīva's* being a *s'esha* there is appropriateness and also a like appropriateness in the owner protecting what is his own. It would become possible to adopt such means as are agreeable to Him with the help of the measure of independence granted (to us) by Him as the Supreme Controller and to expect His favour in regard to the fruit or object of attainment. This *s'eshatva* or existing solely for the Lord and being absolutely subject to His will and control — these two will help, in the stage of realisation, to perform the kind of service that is agreeable to Him as that ordained by Him.

If these objectors hold that, on account of the knowledge of being the *s'esha* and of entire dependence on Iswara, the *jīva* should make no effort for his own protection, it would follow that the service (*kainkarya*) rendered in accordance with the *s'āstras* for the attainment of the Lord's favour and so also *prapatti* which is prescribed as possible, would be beyond his competence, because they are understood as being opposed to his essential nature. We have already stated that *prapatti* is capable of being adopted as a means in as much as it has been prescribed in the words "*s'araṇam vraja*" (seek refuge), as something that has to be performed over and above the mere knowledge of the relationship (between the *jīva* and Iswara) arising from the texts. Therefore there is no inappropriateness in the *jīva*, who exists only for the Lord and who is entirely subject to His control, adopting such means of his own for his protection as he is competent to adopt.

## *THE OBJECTION THAT THE RITES OF VARṆA AND ĀS'RAMA AND BHAKTI YOGA ARE INCONSISTENT WITH EXCLUSIVE DEVOTION TO THE LORD.*

(g) However, it may be stated, since the *jīva* has understood clearly that He exists solely for Iswara and for no other, it is opposed to his nature as a supreme and exclusive devotee of the Lord to practise the rites (*dharma*) ordained for his *varṇa* and *ās'rama*, because they imply the mediatorship of other deities (like Agni, Surya and Varuna) and also to practise such things as *bhakti yoga* which have these rites as their *anga* or accessory. It is only *s'uddha yājis* who worship the Lord alone (without any reference to other deities) that deserve to be called men with supreme and exclusive devotion to the Lord (*paramaikāntī*)". This objection can arise only from a lack of clear understanding of the conclusion arrived at in such treatises as *S'rī Bhashya.* It may be asked how. The answer is that in such *vidyās* as *Pratardana* and *Madhu vidyā*, it is distinctly stated that the Supreme Being is to be worshipped or meditated upon by the aspirant for *mukti* as having Indra and other deities as His body. The author of *S'rī Bhashya* has declared that in regard to the rites and duties of the *varṇa* and *ās'rama* also, which are *angas* or accessories to the *vīdyās*, the object of worship or meditation is only the Supreme Self who has the respective deities as His body. Therefore what is opposed to exclusive devotion to the Lord is the worship of other deities as if they were independent, and also connection with other deities owing to a desire for certain specific fruits, when these deities have nothing to do with the rites and duties which are compulsory and recurrent (*nitya*) as well as those which are incidental and occasional (*naimittika*). There is no opposition to supreme and exclusive devotion to the Lord in performing one's ordained rites and duties without any attachment to or desire for any other fruit and with the thought that these deities are attributes of the Lord and that such words as Agni denote the Lord

who has Agni and the like as His body or attributes. There is no opposition to exclusive devotion, likewise, in following the principle: "These [22] words (Agni, Indra etc.) directly denote, by their etymological significance, the Supreme Self. It is not improper to think so. So says Jaimini", for these are rites and duties enjoined (in the *s'āstras*).

(h) "But", it may be argued again, "the *s'āstras* have enjoined also rites for such things as betwitchment (** *abhichāra*) to produce conviction. In the same manner, the forms of meditation (or *upāsana*) have been enjoined only in order to produce conviction or faith in the efficacy of what is prescribed (by the *s'āstras*) *viz.*, *prapatti*. It does not mean that they are to be performed. To the aspirant for *mukti*, the end or object of attainment and the means of attaining it are both one and the same. Therefore the means favourable for the attainment of that end is only Iswara. It is on account of this that the god presiding over *dharma* condemned *upāsanas* as opposed to the end in view. while saying to his son :— " O, [23]Bharata, If you are afraid of *sins*, do not begin any activity and remain with the thought that Narayana is the only end to be attained with all your heart." This argument, too, is not tenable for the following reasons :—

(1) The rites of bewitchment (*abhichāra*) and the like are sources of evil, because they are performed for purposes or fruits that are evil. Since *bhakti* or *upāsana* is enjoined for attaining *moksha*, it cannot be a source of evil:

---

*Suddha Yajis* :— Those whose adoration is solely to Bhagavan without any intermediaray like Agni, Varuna and the like.

** NOTE :— The Vedas prescribe the rites called *abhichara* for causing the death of one's enemy. They do so in order that by seeing the effect, men may have faith in the *sastra*.

22. Brahma Sutras: 1–2–29

23. Vishnu dharma : 66–72

(2) It would be inconsistent with the view of these critics to hold that *bhakti* or *upāsana* is enjoined only to produce an eager desire for the adoption of an easier means, *viz.*, *prapatti*, by describing a more difficult means, *viz*, *bhakti*, for they hold that *bhakti* is no means at all (to attain *moksha*). Besides *bhakti* does not yield its fruit in this life but only after it. So it cannot create faith or conviction in the other means prescribed, *viz*, *prapatti*. Men generally adopt, of their own accord, the easier means in preference to the more difficult means. The success of the easier means in producing the desired result will create faith or conviction in regard to the more difficult means and not *vice versa*. So the more difficult *upāya* cannot cause faith in the efficacy of the easier means. It will, therefore, have to be argued in support of their view that, when certain fruits or good results which will arise from a main rite or *angī* are stated to arise from its *anga* or accessory rite, it should be considered only as *arthavāda* or mere praise having no literal truth according to a principle (or *nyāya*) of the Mimamsakas. Here *moksha* is really the fruit of *prapatti*, which is the *angī* and this fruit is, in the view of these critics, for the sake of mere praise (which is not true), assigned to its *anga bhakti* also. So, *bhakti* is, according to them, really not capable of yielding *moksha*. This argument, too, is no good as it would be inconsistent with the contention of these critics, for they would then have to admit that *bhakti* is an *anga* or accessory of *prapatti* (which they deny).

The means or *upāya*, that is favoured by Iswara, who is the object of attainment, can be understood only from the *s'āstra* (and it is no use asserting that *bhakti* is not favoured by Him). Reason is not competent to say that the means, *viz.*, *bhakti* is opposed to the end in view (Bhagavan). If we are to object to any one thing that is prescribed in the *s'āstras* by reasoning which is against the *s'āstra*, there would, by parity of reasoning, be no validity in any of the things or *dharmas* prescribed in the *s'āstras* and, likewise, in the *s'āstras* prescribing *prapatti* as well.

Further there is no authority for the statement that in the *s'loka* quoted above (from *Vishnu dharma*: note 23), the word *pātaka* (sin) refers to *upāsanas* and the like. Therefore since *bhakti* and *prapatti* are both enjoined for the aspirant to *mukti*, they are, either of them, to be adopted in accordance with the competence (of the individual concerned).

(i) Nor would it be proper to hold that, though these two *bhakti* and *prapatti* are enjoined (in the *s'āstras*), *bhakti* or *upāsana* and the like are not to be practised in as much as they have not been favoured for adoption by the *āchāryas*; (for instance) such things as the slaying of a bull for the entertainment of a guest at dinner, though enjoined, are opposed to the traditional practice of the learned (*s'ishta*). This objection, too, is not that of a thinking mind. It is only when *all* the *āchāryas* avoid the performance of a rite or observance, that it should be abandoned in accordance with the saying :— "Though a rite[24] has been prescribed in the *s'āstra*, yet if it will retard the attainment of *svarga* and is also repugnant to the general public, it should not be performed ". In regard to the rites in question, since they were adopted by such ancient *āchāryas* as Parasara who is described by Alavandar as one of the best sages, it cannot be maintained that they are against the traditional observance of all learned men.

(j) In the same way, it cannot be argued that, "though these rites were suitable as *dharmas* to be practised in other *yugas*, since in Kali Yuga, it is not possible to find men competent to perform such things as the *upāsana* or meditation of the Supreme Self, they are not suited for observance in this age. That is why it has been said :— " Whatever[25] fruit a man obtained in Krita Yuga by renunciation (*tyāga*), whatever fruit a man obtained in the Dvapara Yuga by the performance of *yajnas*, whatever a man obtained in Tretayuga by worshipping the Lord, that a man attains in Kali Yuga by the mere mention of His names ", and so also in the *Mahābhārata* :— " Kali [26] Yuga has this one great

24. Yagnyavalkya Smriti: 1–156
25. Vishnu purana: 6–2–17
26. Mahabharata: 11–3–51

advantage, O, king; in Kali, a man gets rid of his past *karma* by the mere mention of Sri Krishna's names and attains the Lord". Against this objection we may state that even at the present time, there may be present men who are competent to perform such things as *upāsanas* and who, like the ancient *āchāryas*, are established in *yoga* for its own sake, for it is said :— " To the [27] man who has Govinda at heart, there is Kritayuga in Kali yuga and to him who does not entertain Achyuta at heart, there is Kali Yuga even in Krita Yuga." If these were not admitted, it would follow that even *prapatti*, which is different from the mention of the Lord's names (*samkīrtana*) is not to be performed, because it is difficult to find men who are competent to perform it and who have the intense faith (*mahā vis'vāsa*) necessary for it, for it has been said :— " There is [28] no man ( O Brahma ) who is competent to be initiated into this *mantra*, who is competent to perform the rite uttering this *mantra* or who will listen to it." Therefore since there is no other objection to such things as *upāsanas*, they can be said to be unsuitable only for those *adhikārīs* who are "destitute[28A] of all *upāyas* and who have no other way of salvation", because they are inappropriate for their competence in the same way as ablutions by complete immersion in water are unsuitable for those that are ill. It is in regard to such men as do not understand their being incompetent ( for *bhākti* or *upāsana* ) and who adopt it as a means that it is said : " It is owing [29] to the weakness of mind which fails to understand its competence or incompetence that a man adopts *bhakti* as an *upāya*. Therefore even these *upāsanas* and the like are, for other *adhikārīs*, suitable to the extent of their competence. Incompetence for them arises from inability to adopt them or the inability to endure delay ( in attaining salvation ). The man who has this incompetence adopts *prapatti*. The man who has adopted *prapatti* as an independent and direct *upāya* is proclaimed as " one who has [29A] performed a sacri-

27. Vishnu Dharma: 109–57
28. Poushkara Samhita:
28A. Alavandar: Stotram: 22
29. Lakshmitantram: 28–17
29A. Tiruvoymozhi: 5–7–5

fice,' 'one who has [29B] done what he ought to do' and 'one who[29C] has performed a hundred sacrifices' by the Alvars, the great sages and the Lord's *S'āstras* (*Bhagavat S'āstra*) and the Vedas. Further these authorities also praise all his activities up to the time of death, as if they were the varied duties connected with *yajnas* and ending with the final bath (*avabhrita*). They hold also that, in the same way as the man who has performed a *yajna* performs the compulsory and occasional rites (*nitya* and *naimittika*) after it, the man who has adopted *prapatti* should perform the duties of his *varṇa* and *ās'rama* as the commands of the Lord who is omnipotent and that the man who has performed the sacrifice or *yajna* of the self does not require the performance of any other activity for the fruit desired by him. Therefore as stated in such places as the *s'loka*:—"The *Yogī* is[29D] superior to all those who practise austerities (*tapas*); he is superior also to the *jnānīs* and to those who perform the rites and duties (ordained for them). Therefore, O Arjuna, become a *yogin*"; the *dharmas* or activities of renunciation are superior to the activities or *dharmas* of action (*pravritti*); so also the *yoga* connected with the self is superior to all other *yogas*; of all *yogas* the highest is the *yoga* connected with (Sri Krishna), the son of Vasudeva, for it has been said, "The [30] man who fixes his mind on me and worships me with earnest faith should be considered as the highest among *yogis*". Similarly of all the *vidyās* or forms of meditation on the Supreme Self, only the particular *vidyā* which is called *nyāsa*, *nikshepa* and so on is the highest, for, among other reasons, it is easy, it has to be performed only once, and it leads to the attainment of the end soon. This truth regarding the *Nyāsa vidyā* is stated explicitly in the *Bhagavat S'āstra* in the following *s'lokas*: "Of all [31] the austerities (*tapas*) prescribed for the attainment of *moksha*, the austerity called *nyāsa* (*prapatti*) is the highest", and "Those [32] who, with their thoughts fixed only on *moksha*, are absorbed in the per-

29B. Satvata Tantra:
29C. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37
29D Bhagavad Gita: 6-46
30. Bhagavad Gita: 6-47
31. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-36
32. Lakshmi Tantra: 17-62

formance of *karmayoga* and those, again, who follow *jnānayoga* and *bhaktiyoga* do not deserve to be placed on a par with even one-ten millionth of the man who has performed *prapatti* ".

To the man who is unable (owing to illness) to perform such things as ablution by immersion, " the meditation on [32A] Vishnu, which is called mental ablution, is ordained; thereby he obtains not only the purity of those who perform the other kinds of ablution, but acquires freedom from sins and the pleasure of the immediate enjoyment of Bhagavan. In the same way, though *prapatti* is ordained for those who are not competent to perform such things as *upāsanas*, it confers the fruits attainable from them; it secures them (the *upāya*, namely, *upasana* also); it redeems the man who is destitute of all other *upāyas* (*akinchana*); and further it secures the fruit (desired by him) at the time when he wants it. Therefore *prapatti* has superior potency.

## *DOES PRAPATTI REQUIRE ANGAS OR ACCESSORIES?*

So far we have removed the misconceptions that may arise about the competence for the *upāya* and its essential nature (*svarūpa*). Henceforward we will proceed to remove those misconceptions that might be entertained in regard to accessories of that *upāya*. (1) Is it necessary that this *upāya* should be accompained by such things as the determination to do what is agreeable (*ānukūlya sankalpa*)? Will the Saviour who said, "If a [33] man seeks protection with the desire for the immediate attainment of an object (*ārta*) or with endurance of delay in the attainment (*dripta*), he should be protected by those who know the *sāstras*, even though he might be an enemy," "I will,[34] in no circumstances, abandon one who has come to me in the guise of a friend, even though there are faults in him. The great will appreciate this," and "Bring him[35] here, O Sugriva, whether he be Vibhishana or

32A. Gargya Smriti
33. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18-28
34. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18-3
35. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18-35

even Ravana himself. I promise protection to him" — (will the Saviour who said these words) and who was gracious even to his enemies care for the faults of those who have sought refuge under him? The ancients describe Him as the Protector of the whole world without any consideration of merit. Therefore these accessories (such as *ānukūlya sankalpa*) are not requisites but attributes that are most likely to be met with in those who have performed *prapatti*." Such is the contention of some critics. In reply to this misconception, it may be said that the passages on which it is based may really have, for their purport, the idea that though such attributes as *ānukūlya* do not continue after the performance of *prapatti*, some expiation will occur and there will be no diminution in the fruit of *prapatti*, (They do not mean that qualifications like *ānukūlyasankalpa* are not required at the time of the performance of *prapatti*). If this explanation is not accepted, many authoritative passages which distinguish between the main rite (*angī*) and its accessories (*anga*) such as "*S'araṇāgati* is of six kinds," "*Nyāsa* has five *angas*" and "Let him perform that *prapatti* which has five accessories" — many such authoritative passages would offer opposition. We have already stated that (the absence of these accessories) would be against what is the subject of experience in the world in regard to the conventions regarding the surrender of objects that have to be protected and that these accessories are required only once and so on. Even the divine missile, Brahmastra, requires its own accessories (*angas*). Hence the *s'loka* that 'there is no other requisite[36] for *prapatti* anywhere and at any time" only states that it does not require any other *dharma* or rite. (It does not mean that (even) the *angas* of *prapatti* are not required). Otherwise even intense faith (*mahāvis'vāsa*) which these critics commend as an *anga* might be considered as an attribute which may be found (in a *prapanna*) and not as an *anga*.

36. Sanatkumara Samhita.

## *WHY SHOULD INTENSE FAITH BE CALLED AN ANGA INSTEAD OF MERE FAITH?*

In this connextion, some others may contend as follows:— "When the believer has faith in what is stated in the *s'āstras*, what is the meaning of saying that there is something else called 'intense faith' or *mahāvis'vāsa*? Therefore there is no point in holding that this *mahāvis'vāsa* is anything other than the faith in the *s'āstra* which is general and that it is a special *anga* or accessory of *prapatti*. This contention (or objection) is refuted by the well-known fact that there are degrees of faith as stated in the *s'loka*:— "One should[37] never place confidence in a man whom one does not trust. Even in a man whom one trusts, too much confidence should not be reposed." It is also refuted by the text which prescribes extraordinary faith as an *anga* or accessory (in regard to *prapatti*).

Bhagavan Narada has declared in *S'rīmad Ashtākshara Brahma Vidyā* that there are, in different men, varying degrees of faith in the *Moolamantra*. (He says):— "In [38]proportion to the degree of faith that a man has in *Ashtākshara*, will he attain the fruit thereof. It is impossible to measure its greatness." The Supreme Ruler of all will ultimately protect even those *prapannas* who are far from perfect and whose faith is not strong enough. If authority is asked for this statement, here it is:— "By the[39] man who has once uttered the two syllables 'Harih' — by him steps have been taken for entering *moksha*". In accordance with this, Alavandar has conveyed the same idea in the *s'loka* :— "Whoever[40] folds his hands in worship to Thee in any manner and at any time — his sins vanish at once. It generates all good things. It never fails to bear fruit," and so also, "A single[41] drop of the ocean of nectar called *bhakti* towards the two lotuses of Thy feet will extinguish instantly the spreading wildfire called *samsāra* and confer superior happiness". By uttering the three syllables

37. Mahabharata: Udyoga parva: 38–39
38. Naradiya kalpa: 1–14
39. Vishnudharma: 70–84
40. Stotram: 28
41. Stotram: 29

"Govinda", Kshatrabandu, who stood surrounded by his past *karmas* swarming ( like ants ), attained the highest state." As implied in these passages, Iswara will promote the perfection of the *upāya* and protect the man. Has not this idea been conveyed by Sri Sandilya Bhagavan to Devala in the following *s'loka* :— "Many of your [43]previous births ended in vain. Consider how this life, too, may end in vain and perform *prapatti?* From the *s'loka* :—"The divine [43A]seers say that Thou art to be sought as the Saviour and that Thou protectest those who have sought Thy protection." — (from this *s'loka*) it should be understood that intense faith can be found (only) in the divine seers and not in ordinary men) and that, by the authority of what is said by the divine seers, those whose faith is not strong should strengthen it. Therefore since there are varying degrees of faith, what is stated in the *s'āstra* about intense faith being an *anga* of *prapatti* cannot be objected to.

### *CAUSES OF THE DECAY OF FAITH AND THE REMEDY THEREFOR*

We will now show how some people suffer from diminution of faith and state how this tendency can be corrected. Some may ask:— "How could *bhakti* and *prapatti* lead to such opposite results as worldly prosperity and *moksha* merely because of the difference in the mental attitude (of those who adopt them)? Have we ever seen the same seed yielding two different fruits owing to the diversity of intentions in the (mind of the) sower? The answer to this question is as follows:— "The *s'āstra* which is the (sole) authority in regard to matters pertaining to it in the same way as sense - perception (*pratyaksha*) is in regard to what pertains to it — the *s'āstra* can certainly declare it to be so and reason has no right to attempt to disprove it. In worldly life, if we give an object to a charitable and generous king as an article for sale, we shall obtain a liberal return; but if it is given (without any

42. Tirumalai: 4
43. Sandilya Smriti:
43A. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 120-18.

thought of such return) merely as an offering or tribute, we see it produce whatever is desired (by the person).

These two *bhakti* and *prapatti*, are of the nature of a rite prompted by *pravritti* (activity prompted by worldly interests), when they are adopted by a person who expects some benefit other than (*moksha*) and in the case of those who desire only the feet of Bhagavan, they are of the nature of a rite of renunciation (*nivritti*). The same holds good of such things as the rites and duties which are compulsory and regularly recurrent and those which are compulsory and occasional (*nitya and naimittika*).

If it be asked whether *ūpasāna* (*bhakti*) and *prapatti*, which are different in their nature since the former has to be repeated continuously (till death) and the latter to be performed only once — whether these two could yield the same fruit; the answer is as follows:— "It is certainly possible, since it depends upon the competency of the person (adopting the *upāya*), as in worldly life and in the *Vedic* tradition.

To those aspirants to *mukti* who have adopted *prapatti* as an independent and direct means, the *upāya* (means) and the end (which is) *moksha*, namely, the attainment of Bhagavan are one and the same (*i. e*) Bhagavan. However, owing to the degree of urgency (*tvarā*) in the desire for *moksha* which arises from the suffering of *samsāra*, there may be delay or absence of delay in the attainment of the fruit in accordance with the time when it is respectively desired by the persons concerned (*viz.*) *ārta* and *dripta*).

The reason why the Alvars, Nathamuni and the like obtained such things as direct vision (*sākshātkāra*) of Bhagavan, while others who adopted *prapatti* had to go without it is (two fold):—the difference in the desire for the fruit expressed at the time of *prapatti* and also the difference in the past good *karma* which had begun to operate in this life.

Though that part of the fruit formerly desired is certain owing to the performance of *prapatti* on a single occasion, yet, if a person eagerly desires some other part of the fruit not desired before, a further *prapatti* is also appropriate.

2. Some critics may entertain doubts in regard to the effectiveness of *prapatti* which is the means of attaining all benefits without exception, when it is found that some forms of *prapatti* intended to secure tangible benefits in this life itself fail to do so. These critics should be made to understand that if there is no effect, it is due to some defect in the activity (*karma*), in the doer (*kartā*) or in the means or accessories (*sādhana*), just as in the case of other rites prescribed in the *s'āstras*. (For instance, the *s'āstra* says, "He who desires rain should perform a *yajna* with *karīri* (bamboo sprouts)". If the rain does not follow the *yajna*, it must be due to some defect in the performance of the *karma*, in the doer, or in the sacrificer or in the accessories or *sādhanas* employed in the sacrifice). Defect in the performance (of *prapatti*) consists in the lack of intense faith, (*mahāvis'vāsa*), and the like. Defect in the doer consists in the absence of competency prescribed for *prapatti*. Defect in the *sādhanas* or accessories is the absence of such things as the teaching of the wise which is essential for the performance of *prapatti* in accordance with the *s'āstras*. When *prapatti* is done without any of these defects, we see even the attainment of visible and (tangible) fruits that have been desired as the result.

3. Yet others might contend as follows :— "Such sages as Vyasa who are alike the expounders of all *s'āstras* including the *s'āstra* on *prapatti* state :— "After[44] studying all the *s'āstras* and after frequent investigation of their meaning with the help of reason, this one truth alone becomes evident: Narayana should always be meditated on." "Hari [45]alone is fit to be meditated on always by people like you who are *sāttvikas*." "Vishnu[46] is *cons-*

44. Mahabhrata: Anusasanika parva 178-11

45. Harivamsa: 132-8

46. Harivamsa: 132-14

*tantly* to be meditated on. He should never be forgotten." When they have arrived at this conclusion, how could it be said that, by the performance of *prapatti* on a *single occasion*, *moksha* could be attained? The passage in the *Gītā* which says :— "Those[46A] who perform *prapatti* to me alone, get over *māyā* which cannot be easily got over — this passage and others like it refer to *prapatti* which is an *anga* or accessory to *bhakti* (*upāsana*) or meditation. Similarly such texts as the *Charama s'loka* should be considered as prescribing *prapatti* with its accessories only as an *anga* of *bhakti*". This contention of theirs is inappropriate. (For it has been said): "Those [47]who are incapable of meditation (*upāsana* or *bhakti*) and seek Thee as their *upāya* — even they cross over *samsāra* and enter Thy abode, Vaikunta," "Whatever[48] object is desired, by whatsoever person and whatever cannot be obtained by other means, and that *moksha* from which abode there is no return and which cannot be attained by *karma yoga*, *jnānayoga*, or *bhakti-yoga*, all these fruits are obtained, O great sage, by those who respectively strive for them by the performance of *prapatti*. The Supreme Self is attained only thereby." As stated in these passages, if *prapatti* adopted as a direct and independent *upāya* is well established, the *prapanna* acquires, as its reward, the capacity to meditate constantly on Narayana as stated in *S'rī Vaikunta gadya*. This is just like milk being a suitable drink for both the healthy man and the man who is in ill-health. Though meditation (*upāsana* or *bhakti*) with its (Vedic) *angas* is not within the competency of every one, yet it is not impossible for everyone to meditate on the Lord in such measure as is possible for one with his competency, as may be seen in the passage :— "May I, [49]as the result of Thy will, be endowed with the power of constantly meditating on Thee!" The author of *S'rī Bhāshya*, too, after teaching this *upāya* (*prapatti*) in his smaller *gadya* (*Sri Ranga gadya*) and in the longer *gadya* (*S'araṇāgati gadya*) and referred to it briefly in the *Vaikunṭagadya*, is pleased to teach this form of

46A. Bhagavad Gita: 7-14
47. Brahma purana:
48. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-25
49. Tirucchanda Viruttam: 101

meditation so that the desire for the end in view may gain in strength without suffering any diminution. He does so in the passage which begins as follows:— "In order[50] that one may continue to live the life of the spirit, one should meditate in this manner."

### *THE RITES NITYA AND NAIMITTIKA ARE, ON NO ACCOUNT TO BE GIVEN UP BY THE PRAPANNA:*

The author of *S'ri Bhāshya* has also described in his *Nitya* the special form of worship (*poojā*) which is referred to in "I spent[51] my time in studying the books which mention the attributes of the Lord, in listening to others reading them and in worshipping Him," (The description) begins (with the sentence):— "I will [52]now explain the manner in which the man with exclusive devotion to Bhagavan should perform the adoration (*ārādhana*) of the Lord, Having become a worshipper with supreme and exclusive devotion to Him and with a desire only to serve Him", he goes on to say, "Remain meditating[53] (on the Lord) with a vision as clear as visual perception and with extreme love (to Him)".

This service to the Lord which is the overflow of uninterrupted meditation and seeks no other interest or profit and which consists in five forms of service in the course of the day, is in accord with what is enjoined in the scripture of Bhagavan (*Bhagavat S'āstra*) and with what has been prescribed by Vyasa, Daksha and other great sages. It is also implicit in the following Tamil verses:- "Giving up anger and deceit and controlling the senses, [53A]one should perform adoration five times in the day", as commented on by the *āchāryas*. "Approaching[54] the Lord in the morning (*abhigamana*), then proceeding to collect the materials required for his worship

50. Vaikunta gadya
51. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi 63.
52. Ramanuja: Nitya
53. Ramanuja: Nitya
54. Vangipuram Nambi: Karika 34-36
53A. இருமுப்பொழுதும் is a phrase occurring in the verse மறந்திகழும் Perumal Tirumozhi (1.7)

(*upādāna*); next performing the adoration (*ārādhana*), afterwards uttering the sacred *mantras* (*japa*); lastly meditating on the Supreme Lord (*dhyāna*); thus in the aforesaid five parts of the day, I will spend my days adoring Him with the good incense and flowers gathered by me with my own effort." Having heard, from the author of *Sri Bhashya,* this five-fold division of the day and what should be done in each, Vangipuram Nambi briefly summarised it in his *Nitya* in the words quoted above. This may be seen also in the treatise on daily life written by Periajeer and others. Any differences that might appear in these descriptions are easily explained as due to differences found in different *Samhitās*.

Hence the *prapanna* should spend his time in accordance with such *s'āstraic scheme* of life as has been taught by his *āchārya* in rendering service to Bhagavan with no other purpose than to please Him. (In this context the following passages may be borne in mind):— "I do[55] not desire to go to the divine world leaving Thee; nor do I desire to enjoy immortality so also without Thee, I have no desire for the glory which comes of ruling the world". "You will [56]enjoy yourself with Sita on the slopes of the mountains. I will render all service to you whether you are awake or asleep". "I may[57] be born to any one in whatever family; (wherever I may be born), may I have the eager longing to enjoy the pleasure of rendering service to Thee! I will never do anything on behalf of any other deity with my body, mind, speech or head". "The [58]only object that I have in view is that the Lord should take me into His service for His own pleasure."

This daily worship of Bhagavan consisting of *abhigamana* (approach) (and the four other duties) should not be done for the sake of such things as vanity, gain or honours as done by unbelievers; nor should it be done for the sake of any other object in

55. Ramayana: Ayodhya kanda: 31-5

56. Ramayana· Ayodhya kanda: 31-27

57. Jitanta: II

58. Tiruvoymozhi: 2-9-4

view (than pleasing Bhagavan, as may be done by those who have no knowledge of the truth and have not yet acquired freedom from the desire for worldly pleasures (*vairāgya*) and other such virtues. Without any desire even for the attainment of *moksha* as by those who adopt *bhaktiyoga* but have not completed it, if this mode of worship is performed with the sole desire of doing what is agreeable to the Lord for its own sake, as it is done by those who have already attained *mukti*, this *abhigamana* (approach) and other things will shield the *prapanna* from the approach to other deities (*abhigamana*), from activities for the sake of other interests (*upadana*), from *yajnas* to other deities, from words about other (deities) and from meditation (*dhyāna*) of the other deities

Perialwar has pointed out that there will be no approach to other deities (*abhigamana*) in the following verse :— "Now[59] that I have the austerity (*tapas*) of rendering service to Thee, it would be a detraction from Thy glory, if I were hereafter to stand with bowed head in front of the house of any other. Kindly note". He has also pointed out that there will be no activity for securing other things (*upādāna*) in the verse :— "I will not[60] beg of Thee food for eating or cloth for wear." That there will be no *yajna* or sacrifice to others is brought out in passages like these :— "She[61] will never adore any deity other than Bhagavan even in her thoughts", "Who else[62] merits our flowers and our adoration than our Lord?" "(The [63]worship of other deities than Bhagavan) is like washing a wooden doll when ones' mother is at hand to be served", and "O men[64] of the world who neglect Bhagavan and worship *jīvas* as if they were deities! Are you washing a wooden doll with warm water when similar service can and should be rendered to the mothers that gave you birth? Are you without the grace of the Lord that you cannot render service to Him?." In the discourse of the seven sages also, it has been declared thus :—

59. Perialvar - Tirumozhi 5-3-3.
60. Perialvar - Tirumozhi 5-1-4.
61. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-6-10.
62. Tiruvoymozhi: 2-2-4
63. Tiruvasiriyam 6
64. Periatirumozhi 11-6-6

"He who [65]has stolen the **bulb of the lotus* — let him worship other deities than Vishnu, who does good to Brahmins, who exercises control over the gods, who is worshipped by all those who live in the three worlds, who is the cause of the creation, the maintenance, and the destruction of the three worlds, who is under the control of no one else, who is the support of the world and who both creates and destroys the world, and who is the *guru* of the world," and again, "He who has stolen the bulb of the lotus — he is one who never performs those *dharmas* which please the Lord, who never favours them, and who is of such a nature that he practises evil *dharmas* and evil rites." That the *prapanna* will never utter the praise of others is declared in verses like the following:—*Tiruvoymozhi* 3–9 and also in: "The mouth will never sing the praise of any one other than the Lord." So also that the *prapanna* will never think of others is declared in the following passages:— "My thoughts[68] are never with any deity other than the Lord. Bhagavan who helps the gods is aware of this." and "I will[69] never think that there are other deities that I want to attain and that will come to me."

(Our ancient seers) have declared that even those who are not competent to perform this five-fold scheme of adoration may not fail to render this service or *kainkarya*, if they will perform such compulsory and occasional rites as they are competent for, if they sing the praise of the Lord and the like and if they render service to such persons as have the competency to perform that adoration and as have exclusive devotion to the Lord in accordance, with their competence and in perfect dependence on them. And this may be seen in the following passages:— "The adoration[70] of Vishnu is

NOTE* During a famine, seven sages obtained the bulb of a lotus for food and went out for their bath. Indra stole it and hid it. When the sages returned and found it missing, each of them had to swear in these words to prove that he had not stolen it.

65. Mahabharata: Anusanika parva: (142-(59–61)
67. Mudal Tiruvandadi. 11;
68. Tiruvoimozhi. 7-10-10;
69. Peria Tirumozhi 8–10–2;
70. Padmottaram: 29–81

superior to all other adorations. The adoration of Vishnu's devotee, which is different from it, is said to be superior even to that"; "Satagopan[71] is ever in the company of the servants of Bhagavan who saved Gokula with the hill (as an umbrella)" and "The *tapas* of [72]those who are attached to the devotees of the Lord will surpass that of (even) those who sing the praise of the Lord." The joy of those who render this service and of those who look with delight on this service rendered by them is of the same nature as that of Iswara, who alone is competent to rule over the affairs of the world (*jagad vyāpāra*) and of those who have already attained *mukti* and merely look on. There is nothing inappropriate in this joy being the same in the case of those who perform the service and of those who look on it with delight, for it is just like the purifying influence described in the following *s'loka* :— "To hear[73] of the performance of *dharma* (done by others), to see it, to think of it, to speak of it and to find delight in it — all these, O best of kings, purify always the person doing so."

So also it is said in the *Mahābhārata* : — "Therefore[73A] a Sudra should not utter my names with the *praṇava* (the syllable *Om*), and in the *Nāradīyakalpa* "The *japa* of the *ashtākshara*[74] has been prescribed, for women and for Sudras to be performed without the dative suffix thus :— (*namonārāyaṇa*). Similarly there are no rules for them about the *svara*, about *praṇava* and about touching the limbs (*anganyāsa*). It is declared in the *s'āstras* that for women and for *Sūdras*, *japa* consists in the mere utterance of the *mantra* (without them)". In the *Varāhapuraṇam*, it is said, "The man[75] born of the caste of those who eat dog's flesh woke up as soon as the day dawned, finished his observance which consisted in singing the praise of Bhagavan and returned after uttering the *mantra* "*Namo Nārāyaṇa*". So also

---

71. Tiruvoimozhi: 7-4-11
72. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi: 18
73. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva: 96-31
73A. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva: 118-14
74. Naradiya Kalpa
75. Varahapuranam: 139-53

we find the following:— "If a [76]man goes to *Vaikunta* uttering the *moolamantra*, '*Namo Nārana*' with his hands folded in reverence over his head, he will never return to the world of *samsāra* etc, and "If one is [77]to utter the name of Bhagavan, one should say "*namo Narana*". The middle of the sugar-cane (i.e.) *Ashtākshara* with eight joints becomes suitable to everyone, if the root and the top (i.e.) the first and the last syllable are cut off. So also there is nothing inappropriate in all *prapannas* enjoying the delight (*rasa*) of thinking of Bhagavan at any time whatever. It is only for *bhakti yoga*, which has its *angas* or accessories and which is different from *prapatti*, that some are not competent. Even though *prapatti* becomes perfect by the rite which lasts only for a moment (we are taught) thus by the Saviour: "Always[78] utter the *dvaya* with the thought of its meaning (in your mind)". Therefore the command "Narayana is to be meditated on always" should be taken as an *upāya* for *some* (*viz*. those who adopt *bhakti*) and as the fruit for others, (namely *prapannas*). Thus the command is in no way opposed to *prapatti* adopted as a direct and independent means.

Sri Ramanuja has explained in such treatises as Sri *Bhāshya* how *prapatti* is an *anga* to *bhakti* or *upāsana*. In the *gadya* he explains how *prapatti* can also be an independent and direct means. It is true we find the following:— "There is nothing [79]other than *yoga* which can destroy such evil traits as ignorance (*avidyā*) (and conceit)" and, "Past *karma*[80] cannot be destroyed even in ten thousand births without *yoga*. Only the fire of *yoga* can consume away the dry grass of *karma*." But since *prapatti* has been enjoined as a direct and independent means, on the strength of that ordinance, the passages cited above (on *yoga*) should be considered as applicable only to those others who are competent for them.

Similarly answers to other misconceptions that might arise in regard to *sādhyopāya* (*bhakti* and *prapatti*) may be found in

76. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4–5–2
77. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 6–10–1
78. Ramanuja: Saranagati Gadya.
79. Vishnupuranam: 6–7–25
80. Vishnudharma:102–4

*Nikshepa rakshā. Sadhyopāya* as clarified in this chapter should be borne in mind in regard to the three mysteries (*mantras*) in the appropriate place.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

The *S'ruti* states at length that the Supreme Being chooses those who should win His grace; but this choice (of the *jīva* bound by *karma* for the bestowal of His grace) is based on some consideration. Therefore we obtain redemption by the mercy of the Lord who, as *antaryāmī*, supports the world and, as Saviour, helps us cross the sea of samsara and by understanding clearly the good paths for winning His grace (*bhakti* and *prapatti*) as described in the *s'āstras.*

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

Those (great men) who were well-versed in the dialectical methods of rationalists which resemble the art of conjuring, who stand first like the little finger while counting men renowned in argument and whose thoughts have been rendered clear by the soap-nut of the *Upanishads* and the tradition that has followed therefrom — (those great men) have taught us, in the manner described in this chapter, that *Sādhyopāya* (*bhakti* and *prapatti*) are the means of securing the favour of *Siddhopāya* (namely Bhagavan).

## (25) THE CHAPTER ON THE LIMITS WITHIN WHICH THE UPAYAS BHAKTI AND PRAPATTI HAVE POTENCY:

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the Omnipresent Lord (*vibhu*), what and of what description are His qualities, His *vibhavas* (*avatārs*), His sportful activities and the like and the limits set by His command — all these can be determined from the *s'rutis*. So also the greatness of His devotees and the potency of the ways in which we should worship Him (*bhakti*) and the like (*prapatti*) have been determined by great men like Sri Ramanuja in accordance with what is stated (in the *s'āstras*).

We have so far shown the manner in which the misconceptions that arise in regard to the *Siddhopāya* which is revealed by the words in the second or accusative case in *Dvaya* (*S'rīman Nārāyaṇa charaṇau*) and *S'araṇam* and the specific *sādhyopāya* (*prapatti*) mentioned in the predicate (*prapadye*) can be removed. It now remains to clear those misconceptions that may arise about the potency of the *upāya* — *misconceptions* assigning to it a greater or less potency than that warranted by the *pramāṇas* (sources of true knowledge).

### *THE GREATNESS OF THE DEVOTEES OF BHAGAVAN*:

Those who have adopted these *upāyas* are, indeed, described as having the greatness of being capable of securing redemption even to those who are connected with them. It is said: "Their [1]fathers and their grand-fathers dance in joy clapping (their hands) saying: "A devotee of Vishnu is born into our family and he will help to save us from *samsāra* ", and again, " Those seven[2] generations of men who were born before into my family and those seven generations who will be born after me have become the servants

---

1. Varahapuranam 2. Tiruvoymozhi: 2-7-1.

of the Lord. We have obtained this glorious and great existence". Similarly it has indeed been stated that the greatness of the man who has a knowledge of Bhagavan cannot be (adequately) estimated by the gods even": "Even the[3] gods cannot measure the greatness of the man who knows Sri Krishna as He is". However we will now state the limits (of this greatness) so far as caste is concerned, by the force of *pramāṇas* which are not opposed to these texts (quoted above).

## *DOES PRAPATTI ENTITLE A SŪDRA TO BE CONSIDERED A BRAHMIN?*

It is said: "Those *Sūdras*[4] who have devotion (*bhakti*) to Bhagavan are not *sūdras*; they who are devotees of Bhagavan are Brahmins. Those who have no *bhakti* to Bhagavan (Janardana), whatever might be their caste — they alone are *sūdras*". Thus by the presence or absence in them of the specific attribute of *bhakti* to Bhagavan, men of lower castes are called by the names of the higher and men of higher castes are called by the names of the lower respectively. From this, men of poor understanding might ask, "Are not the devotees of Bhagavan of one and the same caste?" If this view were accepted, it would be in conflict with all the *sāstras* that prescribe the respective course of right conduct stating, "Thus will the devotee of the Lord who is a Brahmin conduct himself and thus will the devotee who is a *Sūdra* conduct himself." The distance that exists between the mere Brahmin and the mere *Sūdra* should be considered to exist (also) between the Lord's devotee who is a Brahmin and the Lord's devotee who is a *Sūdra*. The *sāstras* which state that they are equal refer only to such things as the attainment of the final goal (*moksha*). Kadambi Appullar has made this point clear. Further learned scholars (like Peria Achan Pillai) while commenting on the verse, "The [5]name, Narayana confers a (higher) *kulam*", express the

3. Mahabharata: Aranya Parva 191-29.
4. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika-parva: 118-32.
5. Tirumangai Alvar 1-1-9.

following conclusion:— "If a man who is low by birth and by conduct attains contact with Bhagavan, one who has them both should shrink from calling him low, because of the potency of his devotion to Bhagavan". In answer to the question - "But this does not mean intermarriage among them", they declared that this (prohibition of inter-marriage) is due to caste and that the praise of the man is due to his possession of virtues. The words, "It confers a higher *kulam*", and likewise, the passage — "We [6]will give up our former *kulam*, and sing the praise of Bhagavan" mean only exaltation in the Vaishnava *kulam*. His *kulam* is indeed such as will not entertain the worship of other deities as well as the Lord. The saying current in the families of those who are exclusively devoted to Bhagavan (*ekāntī*) is indeed as follows :- "He to [7]whom Vasudeva is not the (sole) deity from birth to death— let him not be born into our family and even if he is born, let him die soon." Though the *kulam* is changed, since the words caste and *kulam* have been used in different senses, we may say that the caste will remain the same, but that the *kulam* will be different. "Though the cow may be of the temple, it does not cease to be a cow". In such passages as this:— "He should be considered[8] as a *Sūdra*", the great sages called men of higher castes by the words applicable to the lower castes and *vice versa* merely to indicate the degree of consideration or respect to be shown. Therefore the purport of the *s'āstra* is only this much· "Brahmins who are not devotees of *Bhagavān* are not to be held in esteem, whereas *Sūdras* who are devotees of Bhagavan should be as much esteemed as Brahmins."

If this were not accepted (as the right interpretation), all rules and regulations (regarding caste) would be set at naught on the strength of the censure and praise (which) alone are intended to be conveyed) in such passages as the following :— [9]"Auspicious qualities which carry esteem do not arise from caste. The gods

6. Perialvar Tiruppallandu 5.
7. Varahapuranam.
8. Parameshtya samhita:
9. Mahabharata : Aswamedhika parva: 116-8
10.

consider as a Brahmin even a *chandāla* who conducts himself in accordance with his caste," "Sannyasins[10] and those who perform *tapas* (austerities) become *chandālas* when they lapse from the code of conduct prescribed for them", and "Because[11] a man's hair has turned grey, he is not esteemed as old. He who has *jnāna*, even if he be a child, is esteemed by the gods as an old man". This is the right explanation of all such passages :—

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :*

When a member of one caste is praised as being of another caste, it is to state that he should be esteemed as such at heart. But social conduct is regulated by special rules governing it.

Sri Vidura, too, performed marriages and the like in accordance with the rules of his caste. "After the best of the Brahmins had eaten, Sri Krishna[12] sat on a high seat and ate the pure and delicious food offered by Vidura." On hearing of this, Duryodhana said to Sri Krishna:—"Without [13]coming to Bhishma, Drona or to me, O Thou of lotus eyes, why didst thou eat, O Madhusudana, in the house of a *S'ūdra*?" Sri Krishna replied, "The food[14] offered by an enemy should not be eaten. (So also) an enemy should not be given food to eat. You hate the Pandavas, O king. Are they not my very life?" In answering thus, it is evident that Sri Krishna admitted the truth of the particular caste ascribed to Vidura by Duryodhana.

It may be asked: "Is not the eating of food cooked by a *S'ūdra* forbidden to Brahmins and Kshatriyas?" The answer is as follows: "Apastamba and others state that *S'ūdras* who[15] are under the supervision of Aryas are competent to cook their food". In other *yugas* (than Kali) there was no prohibition, because good Sudras under the control of Aryas were permitted to cook the food of the Aryas. (We read) further :— "The [16]pure Vidura,

11. Manu Smriti: 2–156
12. Mahabharata: Udyoga parva: 91 (42–45)
13. Bharata Savitri
14. Mahabharata : Udyogaparva : 91–27
15. Apastamba : Dharma Sutra: 2–2–4
16. Mahabharata : Udyogaparva: 91–43

having the qualities necessary for it, brought the food." This testifies to it, as Vidura's exceptional qualities are referred to.

When this Brahma Jnani (Vidura) gave up his life by the power of *yoga*, Dharmaputra (it is true) felt it his duty (as his nephew) to perform his funeral obsequies in the special form (of *Brahmamedha*). But it may have been performed in silence (without *mantras*;) or it was justifiable in the case of that exceptional individual. This should not be considered as a precedent in the case of other individuals (as a principle applicable to all). If (this answer) were not accepted, it would follow that, because the virtuous Pandavas had a common wife, owing to the force of certain exceptional circumstances, others, too, might do likewise. (This would lead to promiscuity in social relations). Therefore each individual should stand firm in his caste and render service (*kainkarya*) to Bhagavan in accordance with what is prescribed as competent for that caste.

Those who abide by the *s'āstras* should not believe in the elevation from (lower) castes stated in the deceptive *s'āstras* (of heretics). The case of such as Visvamitra (who became a Brahmin after being a Kshatriya, was due to certain special causes as the *charu* (oblation of grain cooked in milk and other things) eaten by his mother without knowing that it was intended for producing a Brahmin child — it should not be considered that it is applicable to others as well, for it is against the texts (in the *s'astras*). The incidents and conduct of the Alvars who were possessed of powers even superior to those of Vidura and others should not be taken as precedents for our conduct. If we examine even their conduct carefully, (we shall find) that they did not transgress the rules of their respective castes.

The *s'loka*:—"Vishnu[17] is always to be praised (in song) with true knowledge (*jnāna*). Therefore the pure knowledge concerning

17. Mahabharata - Santi Parva 323-88.

the eternal Lord should be obtained in clearness either from Brahmins or from Kshatriyas or from Vaisyas or from Sudras or from even lower castes - this *s'loka* means merely that since knowledge of Bhagavan is essential as an acquisition, mere knowledge in its clearness should be obtained, when men of the previous castes are not available, even from those that are below them. Notwithstanding this, the initiation into *vidyās* (*upāsanas*), *mantras* and the like should be only from such as Brahmins. This is clearly established from Vidura's words:—"As I was [18]born a *S'ūdra*, I cannot teach any further."

Tuladhara and Dharmavyadha (who were of lower castes) only did this much: they treated with respect the Brahmins who came to them to have their doubts cleared regarding *dharma* and made them understand the points at issue, just like people who put pilgrims on the right path when they happen to have lost their way. They did not become the main *āchāryas* (of the Brahmins). This is how the incidents in the Itihasas should be understood.

"*Bhakti* or[19] devotion is of eight kinds. If this *bhakti* is found in a *mleccha*, he should be considered as a devout and knowing Brahmin. To him giving is proper and from him taking is proper. He should be treated with the same reverence as I myself" - This *s'loka* has been commented upon (by Peria Achan Pillai) as meaning *not* that girls might be given in marriage to him and the like, but that he may be given the gift of knowledge and such like. "Treatment with reverence" (*poojyah*) is a general term. Therefore it means that if a man has devotion to Bhagavan, he should be treated with as much respect as the *s'āstras* permit. Its purport is merely this much, that if a man treats such a devotee in the same way as he would treat others of the same caste, he would go to hell. The great sage summarised this in the *s'loka* "He who [20]treats a devotee of Bhagavan, be he a Sudra, a huntsman, or even a man who eats dog's flesh, as he would treat other men of these

18. Mahabharata: udyoga parva: 41-5. 20. Itihasa samucchayam 27-26.
19. Garuda Puranam. 219-6-5.

castes - he would go to hell." Therefore the potency of devotion to Bhagavan should be so estimated as not to infringe the regulations of caste.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA.*

Therefore the contention that all devotees of Vishnu are of the same caste either because of the lower caste perishing or of all castes perishing—this contention is foolish. Reverence for the sake of devotion to Bhagavan is common, according to the sages, to all. Equality by the destruction of castes and the like will occur (only) at the time of *mukti*.

In the *Bhagavad Gītā* and elsewhere, in such passages as the following, the regulations and limits of the respective castes and regulations of conduct in accordance with castes have been declared in unequivocal terms, even in the case of men who have devotion to Bhagavan:—" Women,[21] Vaisyas and Sudras, even among these, whoever seek me as refuge will attain the highest state". "The man who[22] is absorbed in the performance of the duties and rites pertaining to his caste will attain the supreme end of life. Learn from me how this happens. The man attains his end by worshipping Bhagavan with the performance of his ordained *karma*"; "Therefore the[23] *S'ūdra* should not utter my names with the *praṇava* (*aum*)", "Bhagavan who[24] is the Supreme Person is adored by the man who performs the duties and rites of his *varṇa* and his *ās'rama*. There is nothing which delights Bhagavan other than this". "The man[25] who does not deviate in the least from the *karmas* ordained for his caste, who considers alike those who wish him well and those who wish him ill, and who never deprives another of what belongs to him and never does any action of violence (*himsā*) — know that this man who has a mind free from

21. Bhagavad Gita 9-32.
22. Bhagavad Gita 18(45-46)
23. Mahabharata : Aswamedhikaparva 118-14.
24. Vishnupurana 3-8-9
25. Vishnu purana: 3-7-20

faults like desire is a devotee of Vishnu". Thus the virtue of being a devotee of Bhagavan and the specific fruit which will result from it (*mukti*) are common, whereas diversity of castes and diversity of codes of conduct persist (until *mukti*). This is evident from such passages as this :— "The Sudra is (really)[26]fortunate and *Kaliyuga* is (really) fortunate".

*SATTVAM OF THE BODY AND SATTVAM OF THE MIND.*

It has been said, "*Tamas*[27] (ignorance, sloth etc.,) is found in great measure in the *Sūdra*, *rajas* in the *kshatriya* and *sattvam* in the Brahmin". Owing to the preponderance of such qualities as *sattvam*, in the body, a man is entitled to be called a Brahmin, a kshatriya and the like. But this is different from the praise of being a Brahmin that is often given in certain passages, owing to the quality of *sattvam* and the like in the mind. The qualities of caste pertaining to the body which are due to the special qualities of the body arise even at the time of birth and remain until death. The Brahmin-like qualities which arise out of the preponderance of *sattvam* in the mind may be present in all castes. In such as Prahlada they are present even at the time of birth. In others, owing to such specific causes as contact with *āchāryas*, these (mental) qualities are acquired (later). Some (texts in the) *s'āstras* are applicable to a person as a consequence of the particular caste pertaining to the body. Owing to the Brahmin-like qualities (of the mind) and the like, the attainment of the supreme end of life and the *upāyas* therefor and also such things as eulogy may be found in all castes. If in a Brahmin are found such features as are incongruous (with his caste), it wil meet with censure that, born in a caste which is declared by the *s'āstras* as being capable of such virtues as self-restraint and mental serenity, he lapsed from the condition suitable to him. If a man born in other castes acquires the higher virtues, he will be extolled highly as stated in the *s'loka* :—" Men are to[28] be honoured in the

26. Vishnu purana : 6-2-6
27. Mahabharata : Aswamedhika parva : 40-11
28. Yajnyavalkya Smriti 1-116

following order of preference—for the possession of *vidyā* (*jnāna*), of right *karma*, of age, of relatives and of wealth. Even a *S'ūdra* possessing these is fit to be honoured in old age".

If the excellence arising from the body and from the qualities of the mind were to cause pride or arrogance, it would lead to evil consequences. If the inferiority in the one (caste due to the body) and in the other (mental virtues) as described respectively in the following passages, "I was[29] not born in any of the four castes where *dharma* could be practised.'; and "I was[30] born in a family renowned in the world wherein every one was pure and performed *yoga*, where every one knew the truth about *prakriti* with its three qualities, and the *jīvas*, where every one had his mind firmly fixed at Thy lotus-like feet and yet I inclined to sin and am now sunk in *samsāra*, O Saviour" — if these two kinds of inferiority are realised by a person and if it should generate in him *kārpaṇya* (humility) so that he adopts the particular *upāya* suitable for his *ākinchanya* (helplessness), it will be extolled, because it will lead to the attainment of the ultimate end. Thus though there are regulations regarding castes and the code of conduct pertaining to each caste, there is nothing to prevent a person from being honoured *in the mind* as established above.

### *EKĀNTINS AND PARAMAIKĀNTINS :*

Among those who are devoted to Bhagavan, those who do not bow to any other deity are *Ekāntins* (*i.e.*) men with exclusive devotion to Bhagavan, as stated in the *s'loka*:— "Exclusive devotion[31] (*Ekāntitvam*) to Bhagavan is common to all these three. Exclusive devotion consists in indifference to all other deities and in depending on Him alone."

Among them the man with *jnāna* is called *Paramaikāntin* or man with supreme and exclusive devotion to Bhagavan, because he does not want anything else and among these latter, the supreme

29. Tirucchanda Viruttam - 90
30. Alavandar Stotram: 61
31. Gitartha Sangraha: 28-32

and exclusive devotion of those who, impatient of delay, have performed *bharanyāsa* to the Almighty *S'eshī*, and who, understanding the truth of the *s'ruti* that those asking for other things are like men putting their money to interest, do not ask even for *moksha* as a reward and consider service (*kainkarya*) as an end in itself — the supreme and exclusive devotion of these men is like gold which is sixteen points pure*. The great sages who can estimate this degree of purity have described, at considerable length, the greatness of these men with supreme and exclusive devotion to Bhagavan, in such treatises as the *Mahābhārata*.

It is said in the "*Vihagendra Samhitā*" as follows :— "The man who is always thinking of Narayana — whatever be the calling (*vritti*) he § follows for his living, that is adoration; whatever he says (*jalpah*) is *japam*; whatever he sees is meditation or *dhyāna* ; the water that has received contact with his feet is incomparably holy water; whatever is left after he has eaten will purify; his mere words are a sacred *mantra* : whatever he touches becomes pure." These *s'lokas*, it is true, are authoritative, but "whatever be the calling, that is adoration" does not refer to any calling that is condemned in the *s'āstras*. It means that even if the man is obliged, owing to the unfavourable conditions brought about by place, time and the like, to follow a calling which is not ordained for him, it will be a proper means of obtaining the materials required for the adoration of the Lord, for it has been said : "In [32]times of adversity, a man may follow a calling slightly lower than that prescribed for him." The passage which says :— "Even[33] the sin committed for my sake will be counted as *dharma*" has also the same purport. If this (interpretation) were not accepted, it would extend even to those callings that are prohibited. Even if the reading (in the *s'loka* cited above) be *cheshta* (movement) and not *vritti* (calling), just like the acts intended for keeping the body alive and those that are enjoined by the *s'āstra*, which are

* NOTE:— This means cent per cent purity.

§ another reading is *cheshta* (i.e.) movement (instead of *vritti*).

32. 33.

(therefore) accepted, the word *cheshta* (movements) would refer to such things as the closing and the opening of the eyes which are natural and which are reckoned in the secret *s'āstra* (*i e*) *Bhagavat S'āstra* as among* the offerings to the Lord. This will not extend to those movements that are forbidden (in the *s'āstras*). Only those which are not forbidden and which are consistent with one's nature and reason and with *s'āstra* are ordained as fit to be offered. This applies also to the *s'loka* in the *Gītā* which elaborates this idea, namely, "Whatever[34] you do for the protection of the body, whatever you eat, whatever offerings you make in the fire and whatever *tapas* you perform, do it, O son of Kunti, as if it were an offering to be placed before me" If, in such cases, any offence is committed against the *s'āstras*, one should perform, on the occasion, expiatory rites which are of the nature of service obligatory for the occasion (*naimittka*), in accordance with what is competent for one. "Whatever he says (*jalpah*) is *japa*" does not refer to vain chattering such as is forbidden in the *s'loka*: "Harsh [35]speech, exaggeration of merits, tale-bearing, inappropriate talk— these are the four sins of speech." It refers to the series of speeches and counter-speeches that are held by the man with his disciples, preceptors, fellow students, scholars and those who are in pursuit of spiritual excellence in order to teach what is not known, to confirm what is already known or to remove doubts. Or the word *jalpah* in that *s'loka* might mean the succession of speeches that are made in debate to refute infidels and heretics, for, though it is stated as a general rule, "One should not[35A] debate merely for the sake of a quarrel without the desire to know the truth", yet the *dharma - s'āstras* declare: "One should[36] condemn, according to one's ability, those who speak ill of Bhagavan or of one's *āchārya*". "Whatever he sees is meditation or *dhyāna*" does not refer to such things as witnessing forbidden

*NOTE:—The *sloka* which says:— "Whatever I do by the nature of *prakriti* and with my body, my speech, my senses, my intelligence or my soul, I offer all that to the Supreme Narayana."

34. Bhagavad Gita: 9–27
35. Manusmriti 12–6
35A. Manu Smriti: 4-72
36.

dances. It describes how when this man proceeds to render service (*kainkarya*), whatever object meets his eye appears to him as having Brahman as its inner self, for it has been said, 'I am Hari[37]: all this is Janardana; the causal substances like *mahat* and the effects which are produced therefrom are not different from Him. The man who thinks in this manner — he will never fall a victim to the diseases of pleasure and pain which arise in *samsāra* ". So also it is said, " Whatever[38] appears (before his eyes) is the Supreme Self ". The sentence " The water that has received contact with his feet is incomparably holy water " only assigns a superior merit when it is due. When the water from the feet is considered as holy, if there is exclusive devotion to Narayana in the person, it is said to be holier than other sacred waters. It does not refer to such things as impure water which may, by chance, come into contact with his feet The statement "Whatever is left after he has eaten purifies" refers only to certain specific remnants (of food) (*ucchishta*) which are prescribed as purificatory in contexts like a repeated *Upanayana*. Owing to the excellence of this quality, (the remnant of the food) is said to have superior purifying power. The words, certainly, do not mean that when disciples, sons and the like are devoted to Narayana, whatever is left as remnant after they have eaten is purificatory for *āchāryas* and parents. It is said in the *Sanatkumāra Samhitā* that the man who has eaten the food that has been offered to other deities or what is left as a remnant after those who are other than *gurus* have eaten should, for purification, live on milk alone for a month (*payovrata*), should always utter *ashtākshara* and eat also *Brahmakūrcha - panchagavya*. This passage prescribes the code of conduct for one who follows the *dharma* of Bhagavan and has been taken for illustration by Alavandar in his *Āgama Prāmāṇya*. Therefore the verse— "If the [39]remnant of the food that has been already eaten by the devotees of the Lord is given to me, it will immediately make me pure" — is only applicable to

37. Vishnupurana 1–22–87
38. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi: 54.
39. Tirumali: 42

*gurus.* Even if it is of general application, it means only this much — "If those who are devotees of the Lord should give me what is left over after their meal, it would purify me, even though they have been obliged, by force of unfavourable circumstances like place and time, to follow occupations lower than those ordained for them and to make others also follow them." In this (Tamil) passage, if the word *sesha* should mean only what is left in the vessels in which the food was cooked as in the question and answer (after a *s'rāddha*) — "what is to be done with the food left over?," and "let it be eaten in the company of friends" — if it should mean only this, there is nothing wrong. The word *ucchishta*, too, has been employed in the *s'rutis* to mean what is left in the cooking vessel after (people) have dined. Manu and others have determined to this effect:—"One [39A] should give up wealth and pleasure (*artha* and *kāma*) when they are against *dharma*. Even *dharma* which is likely to bring suffering or which is likely to rouse disgust among people in the world should be given up".

" His very speech should be considered as a sacred *mantra* ":— This means that even the words in the vernacular language employed by him as necessary for spiritual elevation should be cherished like *Tirumantra* and reflected upon. It does *not* mean that his talk on worldly affairs is fit to be uttered as *japa*. The saying: "His[40] words in jest should be cherished as the texts in the *s'rutis*" should also be interpreted in this sense. " All that he touches becomes pure "; This should be interpreted as follows:— When a man is ill (and cannot himself bathe), another is allowed to touch him and bathe for his sake; when the *āchārya* initiates the *s'ishya* into the sacred *mantras*, he touches the *s'ishya* with his hand; this touch is called "touch with the hand of Vishnu". When an idol is newly installed, it is touched with the hand by great devotees of the Lord. In certain other circumstances, too, the touch with the hand is prescribed as purificatory. The passage means, therefore, that his touch of all things is even more purificatory in such contexts as are ordained in the *s'āstras*.

39A. Manusmriti: 4-176 40. Jnanasaram: 40

If this (interpretation) were not accepted, it would follow that the things which are condemned in the following *s'lokas* would become pure by his touch:—"The fruit[41] of the fig tree (அத்திக்காய்) should not be eaten". "One[42] should not eat *kommatti* or (*mullangi*), *athikkāi*, *suraikkāi* and *kovaippazham*. Bhagavan ever stands far away from the man who always eats them." He who eats white brinjals, soap-nut (தேத்தாங்கொட்டை), *kommatti* (or *mullangi*), *kuvalai*, *athikkāi*, *kāndal* in ignorance—to him Bhagavan is always at a distance. He who eats, *kommatti*, *sittavarai*, *kāndal*, *nilaippanai* and *suraikkāi* — to him Bhagavan is ever at a distance." He who eats white brinjals, *kommatti*, cheese (or curds) made from the milk of a cow within ten days of its calving, the bulb of the lotus — he will never think in his last moments of Bhagavan, the Lord of the world, "He who has eaten [43]*velangāi* (வேலங்காய்), *peerku*, *irulli*, *vellulli*, *nāikkudai* (mushroom) *ūrpanrikkizhangu* — he should perform the expiatory ceremony called '*Chāndrāyaṇa*'. "To eat the sprout of the cocoanut, sanaippukkirai, mushroom, *kusumbai*, *suraikkāi*, fruits or vegetables that have been produced with nightsoil as manure, milk mixed with salt, ghee that has been poured into the remnants of food on the leaf or plate, water in the place where the dhoby washes clothes — to eat these is the same as to drink toddy." "The man who thinks of[44] Bhagavan should never drink vinegar (காடி). It is reckoned as liquor. Therefore one should earnestly avoid it." "The [45]Vaishnava who touches blood even without knowing what it is — I never condone his offence, O goddess of the earth, even after a thousand apologies." "He who is born a [46]Brahmin and eats *anna* (cooked food) on the Ekadasi day — he eats sin in every morsel and the morsel is comparable to the dung of the dog". "He who is not ill and yet eats *anna* (cooked food) on the Ekadasi day—he sins as though he has drunk liquor. There

41. Mahabharata: Anusanikaparva 167–97
42.
43. Mahabharata: Aswamedhikaparva 112–44
44. Sandilya Smrıti 2–51
45. Varahapuranam
46. Satvatasamhita

is no doubt of this. The man who drinks liquor goes to hell by himself, whereas the man who eats *anna* on *Ekādasi* day drags his ancestors (also) into hell'. "The mind becomes[47] impure by eating forbidden food, by coveting what one has not got, by seeing various objects of sense-pleasure and by want of cleanliness in the body". "Yama plans[48] to kill the Brahmin with (the weapons of) failure to study the *Vedas*, the absence of right observances, laziness and forbidden food."

If no such discrimination were accepted, it would conflict with many *s'āstras* which have been recognised as great authorities and also with the traditional observances of the learned (*s'ishta*). Therefore to state such views is merely of the nature of exaggeration (of some one aspect). Even by the man who has supreme and exclusive devotion (*paramaikāntin*) and whose greatness is boundless, these restrictions imposed by the *s'āstras* are not violated. This may be understood from the observances until the last day of their lives, of great *āchāryas* like Nathamuni, Alavandar and Sri Ramanuja.

## *THE PERFORMANCE OF THE RITES OF THE VARṆAS AND ĀSRAMAS IS OBLIGATORY:*

Those who are outside the pale of the Vedas and those who hold heretical views give up, owing to delusion, these restrictions and regulations which are ordained in the *Vedas* and the *s'āstras* based on the Vedas. That this kind of renunciation is due to *tamas* is declared by Bhagavan in the *s'loka*:— "One [49]should not give up the *karma* ordained for the castes and the *ās'ramas*. Their omission arising from ignorance is renunciation (*tyāga*) due to *tamas*". He has (also) declared that the giving up of activities and abstentions which are of the nature of pain is renunciation due to *rajas*, in the following:— "He who gives up *karma*,[50] because it is painful and fatiguing to the body — he

47. Sriranga Mahatmiya 47-10
48. Manusmriti 5-3
49. Bhagavad Gita 18-7
50. Bhagavad Gita 18-8

renounces owing to *rajas* and does not obtain the fruit of renunciation." His *tyāga* or renunciation is like that of the man who becomes *sannyāsin* because of the difficulties of maintaining a family.

While giving up, in accordance with our competence, what should be given up and doing what should be done, we should give up the thought, "I am doing all this as an independent agent, this activity is dependent on me: this will be the means of my attaining such and such an object". We should, on the other hand, think that the Supreme Ruler is the (real) doer and that we render service to Him, which is His due, with the sole object of pleasing Him. If we follow this line of thought (in what we do and in what we refrain from), it is renunciation due to *sattvam*, and this has been declared by Bhagavan in :— "To perform the[51] *karma* ordained for a man with the thought that it is an end in itself and that it ought to be done without the thought that the *karma* is his (independent) action and without the desire for gain of any kind—this is, O Arjuna, renunciation due to *sattvam*" The man should observe (these rites and regulations) solely for the purpose of pleasing Bhagavan. He should not even ask for *moksha* as a reward, for he should realise that, by the grace of the All-merciful Lord which has been won by the *prapatti* performed before, *moksha* is certain. (He should) render service (*kainkarya*) like those who have already attained *mukti*. This would resemble a healthy man eating food with milk (without any thought of the cure from illness to be obtained from milk). Such a code of conduct is the highest limit of renunciation due to *sattvam*. This is like eating food when men are hungry. Otherwise their conduct would resemble that of men who eat cakes for winning a wager, (They cannot derive any true pleasure therefrom). [The man that eats food when hungry enjoys it, because he does so with no other object than satisfying his hunger. The man who eats cakes for winning a wager, cannot find any relish in doing so.]

51. Bhagavad Gita 18–9

### *THE REAL MEANING OF "HAVING GIVEN UP ALL DHARMAS" IN THE CHARAMA SLOKA:*

While commenting on the words (in the *Charama Sloka*) "Having given up all *dharmas*", the author of *Srī Bhāshya* interpreted them at first to mean that the giving up of *dharmas* means the giving up of the thought that, in his action, the man himself is the doer seeking a certain gain for himself by that means. This is renunciation of action due to *sattvam* (and not the giving up of the *dharma* itself *viz*, *nitya* and *naimittika*). This form of thought should be borne in mind by the man who has adopted *prapatti* as a direct and independent *upāya*, at the time of the performance of *prapatti* and also in his further actions (after *prapatti*), which are ends in themselves and have no relation of any kind to an *upāya*. In the second interpretation given of those words (by the author of of the *Bhāshya*), they mean that when the man of poor ability who cannot brook any delay in the attainment of *mukti* falls into grief or despair at the thought of all the *dharmas* or rites prescribed in the *sāstras* and his inability to perform them, the Lord, in order to dispel his despair, ordained another means which is easy of performance and has to be adopted only once and said: "You need not go about seeking other *upāyas*" The *prapanna* should note that in order that one may be competent for *prapatti*, the absence of adoption of any other *upāya* before its performance is a requisite which has been present of its own accord by the grace of God. In regard to actions after the performance of *prapatti*, this giving up of the adoption of other *upāyas* is insisted on in the *sāstra* itself and this shows how *prapatti* does not require any aid (after it is once done).

If the word *parityajya* (having given up) merely states what has, on account of inability, already occurred (and not what is enjoined), the meaning (of the first part of the *charama sloka*) would be that this having given up is a qualification for *prapatti*. If, on the other hand, the words (having given up) state what is

ordained or enjoined to be done, then the meaning would be that *prapatti* does not require anything else to be performed. Thus, if *parityajya* (having given up) merely states what has already taken place or what has already occurred, the words *mām ekam* will have to be thought of as meaning that nothing else (than Bhagavan) is required for the attainment of the desired end. If, on the other hand*, *parityajya* means that *prapatti* requires nothing else for yielding its fruit, the words, *mā suchah* (do not grieve), show, by the force of logic or meaning, that the grief or despair which is a mark of being destitute of other means is what is required for competency for *prapatti* (*adhikāra*;)

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

If *prapatti* stands in the place of *bhakti* or *upāsana* as one of the *Brahma Vidyās*, then the question arises whether the *angas* of *bhakti* might be considered as the *angas* of *prapatti* as well. But, in *prapatti*, they are not required as *angas*. This is indicated by the words *mām* and *ekam*.

(If the word, *parityajya*, makes an injunction that other things should not be considered as *angas* for *prapatti*, and if the words (*mās'uchah*) (do not grieve or despair) show that the previous grief or despair is qualification for *prapatti* (*ākinchanya*), then, where is the appropriateness of the word *ekam* (it may be asked). The answer is :— the word *ekam* is intended to show that in the mental or *sāttvika* renunciation of action by *sattvam*, it should be borne in mind that the *jīva's* doership is all dependent on the Lord and other such things, that in *prapatti*, the means (*upāya*) and the end are one and the same (*viz.*, the Lord) and that *prapatti* stands in the place of all (other) *upāyas*.

---

*NOTE:—To the man or *adhikari* who grieves at his inability to adopt the *dharmas* or *angas* enjoined for *bhakti yoga*, the *Charama Sloka* says, "Perform *prapatti* to me and you need not adopt any other *dharma*".

Our *āchāryās* like (Appullar) have argued thus:—

Since *nitya* and *maimittika karma* are enjoined on a man (irrespective of all fruit or gain that might arise from it) simply by virtue of his being a servant of the Lord, they should not be given up, lest he should be violating the command of the Master, (although they may not be required as *angas* for *prapatti*).

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS :*

Those who have violated the commands (of the Lord) and have not performed the expiatory ceremonies ( *prāyas'chitta* ) enjoined for these violations according to their competence — they must suffer the consequences of the violation. By acting in accordance with the commands, one avoids the evil consequences (due to violation) and enjoys (also) the pleasure arising from the delight of the Lord. Thus two gains are certain.

Such things as *svarga* that are declared to be the fruit of certain (good) *karmas* will not arise (as the *prapanna* performs them without desiring any fruit.) But if the man performs forbidden actions, the evil consequences will necessarily follow (though not desired by him), owing to another cause (*viz.* doing the forbidden thing).

When *prapatti* was treated (by the *Bhāshyakāra*) as an *anga* of *bhakti yoga*, it was only to illustrate how it wins *bhakti yoga* as a fruit, since it is capable of securing *all* fruits. In this context, we should bear in mind that, on the lines of the Bhashyakara's second interpretation (of the *charama s'loka*), *prapatti* stands in the place of all *upāyas* including *bhakti yoga*, which are difficult of performance. In accordance with his first interpretation, (that every *dharma* should be done with the thought that it is performed not by oneself but by the Lord and for His own ends — *sāttvika parityāga*) and not out of any desire for one's own gain, the meaning should be considered as enjoining the performance of *prapatti* with that thought and the service rendered by the *prapanna* as an end in itself.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS* :

"When a man falls into despair or grief because he is not able to adopt certain *upāyas* which are prescribed as productive of the desired results — to that man I stand as those *upāyas*. This is the gist of the *charama s'loka*."

The performance or the non-performance of certain dharmas (like *nitya* and *naimittika*) are not to be considered as *angas* of *prapatti*. The man desires to perform these actions of which he is capable, because they have been ordained for him ( without any reference to *prapatti* ). The non-performance of those actions of which he is incapable constitutes *ākinchanya* (helplessness) which is necessary for *prapatti*.

Rites like *dars'a* and *pūrnamāsa* have not been prescribed as requisites for *yajnas* ( sacrifices ). So at the time of the performance of *yajnas*, they are not performed. But on occasions like the new-moon day, they have to be done because they are enjoined on their own account. So also here; (*i.e.*) *nitya* and *naimittika* are not prescribed as *angas* for *prapatti* ; they are not to be performed at the time of *prapatti* as its *angas*, but because they have been enjoined on their own account, without any relation or reference to *prapatti*.

The teaching "Give up[52] *dharma* and *adharma*" relates to the giving up of those *dharmas* which are said to be productive of certain gains ( *kāmya* ) and of those *karmas* which are forbidden." So also "give up[53] *satyam* and also *anritam*" means "Do not desire *satyam** the enjoyment or experience of your self as an end in itself ; also do not desire the enjoyment of **anrita* the pleasures of the world, wealth and the like". It may also mean : "Give up speaking even that truth (*satyam*) which will cause pain to

52. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 339–44

* NOTE :— One interpretation of the word *satya* is the changeless eternal *atma* or self ; *anrita* refers to non-sentient things which contribute to the pleasures of wealth.

others." In order to reveal the excellence of his teaching, it is repeated again :— " Having given up both *satyam* and *anritam*", it is said further, " Give up the thought which enables you to give up *satyam* and *anritam*, namely, the thought that you are the doer ", in order to enable us to realise that even our doership is dependent on another (the Lord) Thus there is no authority here for violating the commands of the Lord.

Now let us consider what was taught to *Uddhava* :— In spite of what has been said so far, some quote the words addressed to Uddhava .— " Give up, O Uddhava, all injunctions (*vidhis*) (like *sandhyā*, which are prescribed as a means to an end); give up all prohibitions such as " don't injure others " ; give up the *dharmas* to be actively performed and also the *dharmas* which prescribe the avoidance of or abstention from certain acts and also the requisites (*angas*) which you have heard so far and which you will learn hereafter as being necessary for both of them — (Give up all these) and seek refuge in Me alone by all means, for I am the Inner Self of all beings. By doing so, you will attain *moksha*, where there is freedom from all fear " They quote these words and argue as follows :— " Since, here we are enjoined† to give up the abstention from certain actions, and since in the *charama sloka*, it is not proper to restrict or limit the meaning of *sarva* (all) in *sarva karmān*, it follows that we should give up even the abstention (from evil acts)." This would mean that we should perform forbidden things as much as lies in our power. Since the doing of these forbidden things is something that, according to them, is enjoined, these people argue in their delusion that even if the *prapanna* does forbidden things deliberately after *prapatti*, there would be no stain left. This is extremely ridiculous, for the (notorious) charvakas (*alepakas*) say that even if a man sins, it leaves no stain behind, whereas the argument stated above goes further and is tantamount to saying that (the *prapanna*) *should* necessarily commit sin: This is [54]like the fish swallowing greedily

53. Bhagavatam: 11-12-14-15 54. Mahabharata: Udyoga Parva: 34-13

†NOTE:—'Giving up absentation from forbidden things' would mean doing forbidden things.

the bait made of iron covered with something which is delicious to eat, without any thought of the consequence. It is in reflecting on such (perversities) that the great sage became sad: "Whatever[55] the good man shrinks from, that the wicked man is delighted with. How painful is the perversity of this world!"

If the interpretation (given by these men) were the real meaning (of the teaching to Uddhava), it would follow that all the forbidden things done by a man throughout his life would be the requisites (*angas*) of *prapatti*. The injunction that *prapatti* with its *angas* should be done only once would then have no meaning. It is not possible to do all the forbidden things at the moment of performing *prapatti*. Nor have we seen any one performing *prapatti*, doing as much of the forbidden as lies in his power. According to this contention of theirs, even sins cannot be called sins (since they are enjoined), in the same way as injury (to animals) in the Agnishomiya sacrifice is not called a sin (because it is enjoined). All this would be in conflict with their own commentary on the words— "I will release thee from all sins", including the sins that might be committed deliberately after *prapatti*. It would imply that we should commit the three kinds of offences (of the mind, speech and body) as much as lies in our power. It is also opposed to the code of conduct followed by previous *āchāryas*, to the tradition of our ancients, to their own actual conduct and, further, to the observances of present day aspirants to *mukti*. Those who contend in this manner should, when they are attacked by a *prapanna* owing to the desire for wealth or for pleasure, have to say; "Is this not, indeed, the *dharma* expected of a *prapanna*?", and feel delighted. This would be opposed to countless *pramānas* and is also not the real purport of the words in question. Some *āchāryas* would explain this contention that abstention from forbidden things is also included in the words *sarva dharmān* (as something to be given up) as due to ignorance of the meaning of the word *dharma*. It is in this way: Among abstentions only that which is done in accor-

55. Mahabharata: Aranya Parva: 2–64

dance with prescribed rules as a means to secure a particular object is called *dharma*. Mere non-violence (*ahimsā*) is only the absense of sin and is not *dharma* in the primary sense of the word (for no rules or restraints are observed). Therefore to give up non-violence under-taken for the sake of an object and in accordance with rules and restraints (*niyama*) means to give up the object aimed at and the rules and restraints in practising it. Beyond this, there is no authority for giving up the abstention from forbidden things that is prescribed in the *nivritti s'āstras* (i.e.) *s'āstras* for securing *mukti*.

Even if it be held that mere *ahimsā* which is not accompanied by *niyama* (the observance of rules and restraints) is also meant by the word *dharma*, we submit the following :—

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS*:

" If the word *dharma* includes in its import also the giving up of *adharma*, the giving up of *adharma* will have to be done always, as it is an independent *vidhi* or injunction (which has nothing to do with *prapatti*),

"It is impossible to contend in an assembly of the wise that the giving up of what is pleasing (to the Lord) *ānukūlya* and the performance of what is disagreeable (to Him) *prātikulya* are *angas* to *prapatti*.

"Let us bear in mind the fact that the injunction not to violate the code of conduct of the good (such as giving up *sandhyā or nitya* and *naimittika*) which we find in the chapter on *prapatti* is intended to apply only to the *prapanna*".

When it is thus clear that these should not be given up as they are injunctions which have no relation to *prapatti* and which are independent rules, it may be asked what is the meaning of the teaching to Uddhava which says "Give up what is enjoined for action and also what is forbidden, give up action and abstention from action". The answer is that they mean only this much : that they should not be observed as *angas* or requisites for *prapatti* :

In the case of the aspirant for *mukti*, it may mean also those activities and abstentions which are enjoined as means for securing certain other ends ( than *moksha* ) in those *s'āstras* that enjoin them, as in the passage :— "Give up[56] those *dharmas* that are the means of securing *dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*," As against this, if it were held that *nitya* and *naimittika karmas* and the like are themselves ( *svarūpatyāga* ) to be given up, it would be opposed to everything that has been pointed out before. Those who are intelligent and who are *sāttvikas* will appreciate this conclusion and approve of it. ( The Alvars ) have stated this in such passages as the following :— "We will[57] never do what ought not to be done. We* will never go ( to any *āchārya* ), and study heretical *s'āstras*", and "Vouchsafe[58] Thy grace so that I may not do wicked deeds". If we consider the import of the verse " O Lord[58A] of the world ! Consider my offences as virtuous acts", it also means the prayer that the offences should be pardoned. Therefore if the *prapanna* happens to commit an offence, he is bound to obtain pardon as declared in the passage :— " Whether [59]offences are committed deliberately or in ignorance, the only expiation that is required is to say " Pardon me ".

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :

" He who is incapable of other forms of expiation or who is impatient of delay performs *prapatti*, once again, to the Lord, without transgressing the rule of *lokasangraha* ".

The contention that when there is aspiration for *mukti*, no forbidden things will be done deliberately means only that it would be unlikely, being inappropriate. It is like the saying that " in the Brahmin[60] there is control of the senses ". ( It does not mean that the control is always found ). Even in the case of great sages

56. Vishnupuranam:
57. Tiruppavai: 2
58. Tiruvoymozhi: 2–9–3
58A. Tirucchanda viruttam: 111
59. Vangipuram Nambi: Karika:
60 Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 16–9

* NOTE:— It may also mean "we will never do what is evil".

and of men who were sage-like, there have occurred forbidden actions and expiations therefor. If it were otherwise ((*i.e*) that the aspirant for *mukti* would never commit an offence deliberately) then, since those who are *upāsakas* following *bhakti yoga* are also aspirants for *mukti*, it would follow that they, too, would not commit offences deliberately and the conclusion that is arrived at in *S'ri Bhāshya* that freedom from stain caused by later sins is applicable only to sins committed in ignorance and that there is no pardon for sins committed deliberately — this conclusion would then become meaningless.

There is no difference between the *upāsaka* (the follower of *Bhakti yoga*) and the *prapanna* in regard to what is forbidden on account of caste (*varṇa*), *ās'rama*, sex (*jāti*), *gotra* (family), *pravara* (ancestry), right conduct, race *kula*, place, time, bodily or mental condition (*avasthā*), character (*guna*) or convention (*samaya*). If what is forbidden has been done, there is difference in the manner of expiation, because that depends on the competency (*adhikāra*).

The verse, "My servants[61] will never commit offences. Even if they commit them, I will consider them as if they were virtuous actions" — even this verse indicates that offences are not unlikely. The sentence "If they commit offences, I will consider them as virtuous actions" means "If done in ignorance, I will pardon them. If offences are committed deliberately and if they do not obtain pardon, I will condone them after inflicting punishment, but will never forsake them. That, as a matter of fact, these offences are not virtuous acts is indicated therein when it is said :— "It will be considered *as if* they were good deeds".

It is (distinctly) stated: "If there is an [62]offence, expiation should be done at once. The expiation that is to be done is to perform *prapatti* again". Therefore it cannot be contended that, if the *prapanna* commits an offence deliberately after *prapatti*,

61. Perialvar Tirumozhi 4-9-2 62. Lakshmitantram 17 (91-92).

Iswara will not have the desire to punish (the *prapanna*), nor can it be said that if the Omnipotent Lord desires to punish and if pardon be not obtained, there will be no evil result following (for when He has once willed, the result must take place, for He is Almighty). If it be held that the offence would only cause the absence of pleasure to the Lord, then if that displeasure would not cause any evil (to the man), there would be no need to perform a later *prāyas'chitta* (which is distinctly ordained in the passage cited above.) If it be held that the utmost that would happen (on account of the offence) is only absence of pleasure to oneself in addition to that of the Lord, the evil consequences, namely, absence of pleasure will have to be admitted. It may be said :— ( Let there be absence of pleasure ; absence of pleasure being only a particular form of knowledge, it would last only for an instant ). There is no reason for performing a *prāyaschitta* in connection with the absence of one's own pleasure which has passed away. If it is said that the expiation or *prāyas'chitta* is intended only to avoid the absence of pleasure in oneself that might continue, then, there is every reason to perform expiation owing to the fear that the sufferings stated in the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* ( for non-performance of ordained rites and observances - *nitya* and *naimittika* ) would follow when the time comes for its fruition, for these sufferings are on the same footing as this displeasure ).

Therefore in order to avoid (1) these sufferings and (2) the interruption to the enjoyment of the Lord ( *Bhagavad anubhava* ) here and the diminution of it caused by the weakness of the senses, the fading of the intelligence, sorrow and the like and (3) in the case of those whose term of life has not already been unalterably fixed, delay in the ultimate gain, *viz.*, *moksha* by the extension of the age limit — in order that this may not happen, *prapatti* has to be performed again. Even those who hold the opinion that this is not required will have to concede that the performance of this latter *prapatti* will be pardoned by the Lord (even if it be considered as an offence ), since they hold the opinion that the Lord will forgive ( even ) the doing of forbidden things.

We have already explained that it is not possible to perform *prapatti* in anticipation for offences that might be committed deliberately in future and that there is nothing improper in performing a later *prapatti* in order to obtain a fruit or object which was not prayed for in the previous *prapatti* (in the chapter on Expitation for Offences ). Thus it may be understood that there is nothing improper in observing the code of conduct followed by the good and arising from the commands of the Lord, (*viz.*, *nitya* and *naimittika* ).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :*

He who maintains the view that the *prapanna* will not be tainted even when he does forbidden things, — why does he view with anger those who, in accordance with the Lord's commands, observe the code of conduct ordained as proper?

When it is held (by these disputants) that even when the (Lord's) commands are violated, He would not fail to protect, how could it be said that He would withhold His protection when His commands are performed ?

No form of service (to the Lord) is proper without right conduct. When a man has not made himself clean, he is not fit to worship the Lord.

*Dharma* is born of right conduct : and the Lord of *Dharma* is *Achyuta*." The meaning of all the *s'āstras* is explained in these words in the fifth Veda (*Mahābhārata*).

The remembrance of the *prapatti* (performed before ) which is taught by the wise is for the purpose of giving up such *prāyas-chittas* as one is not competent to perform and the performance of such others as one is competent for.

When *prapatti* is remembered, the thought will arise that sins committed in ignorance will cause no taint. It will also be understood that when they are committed deliberately, the performance of a further *prapatti* is necessary.

" Therefore the wise man should remain without committing any offence. But when offences have occurred, the proper thing to do would be another *prapatti* ".

The activities of the man who performed *prapatti* (at first) praying that he should be sinless and of the man who performed a further *prapatti* in order that his later life may be free from sin will invariably be free from sin.

## *PRĀYASCHITTA FOR DELIBERATE OFFENCES IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY:*

Some may say, in (utter) disregard of texts to the contrary, that (even) the offences committed deliberately by the *prapanna* would be pardoned, their opinion being based on certain incidents in the *Itihāsas* and the *Purāṇas*. This contention, too, arises from an ignorance of the real opinions in the respective contexts. (For instance) when Sugriva transgressed the time fixed by him for carrying out the terms of the alliance, the offence caused the appearance of great grief in Sri Rama's mind and he said, "The way in[63] which Valin was slain is not yet closed. Abide by the terms of the agreement, O Sugriva. Do not go the way of Valin." On hearing these words, Lakshmana became so angry that the Lord had to bring down his wrath. He went to Sugriva (to denounce him). On that occasion, did not (Hanuman), the scholar versed in the science of Indra's grammer, counsel Sugriva as follows:— "I do not[64] see any other means for you, the offender, to escape from this situation except by begging the pardon of Lakshmana with folded hands". Sugriva, too, accepted this advice and said to Lakshman .— "If out [65]of over-confidence or out of affection, I have transgressed in any way, pray, let the offence of your servant be pardoned". And Lakshmana too, had to seek Sugriva's pardon for over-stepping the proper bounds of speech by

63. Ramayana: Kishkindha kanda : 30–81
64. Ramayana: Kishkindha kanda : 32–11
65. Ramayana: Kishkindha kanda : 36–11

saying:— "Pardon me[66] for any harsh words that I may have uttered after listening to the words of Sri Rama in his grief."

Thus even in the life of a *prapanna*, offences may occur deliberately, owing to past *karma* which has begun to operate (*prārabdha*). When they have occurred, the *prapanna* should repent and obtain pardon. When Alavandar says "I have not [67]observed *dharma* (*i.e.*) *karmayoga* etc" and when it is said. "I have [68]given up the rites that are to be performed by a Brahmin after ablution in the form of adoration to the three sacrifical fires", it means only this much that he was not capable of such things as *karma yoga* and not that we should give up the observance of the Lord's commands (*nitya and naimittika*), in so far as it lies in our power.

Therefore even to a *prapanna*, action in obedience to the commands of the Lord and in accordance with the respective caste is an obligation that should be carried out until the bodies characterised by such things as Brahmin-ness are cast off

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS :—*

"The service to the Lord of Sri (Lakshmi) should be performed according to one's ability and for its own sake, with the observance of all the restraints and regulations (*niyama*) prescribed (in the *s'āstras*), in regard to the food to be eaten, the obtaining of knowledge (or the receiving of gifts), the traditional *mantra* to be employed in the performance of rites and so also in regard to the acquisition of wealth and in regard to the respective caste and such like.

"There is superior excellence in a person (*ádhikārī*) if, among the ordinary ways of right conduct, there is to be found in him the purity of conduct arising from the many purificatory ceremonies prescribed in the *s'āstrás*. So also there is superior excellence in

66. Ramayana: Kishkindha kanḍa: 36–28
67. Alavandar: Stotram: 22
68. Tirumalai 25

the man who, in addition to the qualities of the spirit, such as self-control, has also compassion to living beings. Superior also is the excellence of the man who, among all means of attaining his ends, adopts *bhakti* on *prapatti* There is also a supreme excellence in the man who, among all things desired as ends, chooses only *moksha*. ( The *s'loka* may also mean ) :—

" Superior is the excellence of the man who has the qualities of the spirit such as self-control and compassion to that of the man who merely follows the right code of conduct; superior is the man who has chosen the right *upāya (bhakti* or *prapatti)* to him who has only the qualities of the spirit; superior still is the man who has chosen the right end (namely) *moksha* to the man who has only chosen the right *upāya* ".

This determination of the potency (of *prapatti)* should be borne in mind as being connected with the quality of Iswara as the controller indicated in the three mysteries (*mantras*).

*TAMIL VERSE* :—

Our *āchāryas* have declared that those who have understood the real import of the infallible words (in the *charama s'loka*) uttered by Sri Krishna, whose attributes and actions are wonderful, who is full of compassion and who has greater regard than for Himself to His servants that endure their existence only by His grace (*or* who shows His great regard to His servants by giving them His own likeness) — our *āchāryas* have declared that those who have understood the real import of Sri Krishna's words will never approve the non-observance of the way of life ordained in the *Veda* or *Vedanta*.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :—

Since the differences arising from such things as the four castes and the four *ās'ramas* have been ordained (in the *s'āstras*), those who follow the line of conduct prescribed therein, whose conduct is also consistent with such attributes as devotion to the Lord

and who are proficient in the knowledge of the injunctions concerning *prapatti*, which are diametrically opposed to the non-observance of the rites and duties pertaining to each caste and each *ās'rama*—these men of exclusive devotion to the Lord may be found even in this last *yuga*, and they will approve of the enquiry made so far (in this chapter).

---

## (26) THE CHAPTER ON THE VINDICATION OF (THE) POTENCY (OF PRAPATTI).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:—*

It is, of course, wonderful that stones and the like should become women and the like (Ahalya); (but) more wonderful is it that fire should become as cold as snow (as in the case of Hanuman) and that a blade of grass should become a missile (Kakasura); even more wonderful is the act of slaying when it becomes the means of redemption (as for Sisupala and others) So also it is most wonderful that the sandal (of Sri Rama) should protect the three worlds.

(Since the glory of Bhagavan is so wonderful, there is nothing surprising in *prapatti* to Him accomplishing wonderful things.)

We have already spoken about the limits within which *prapatti* has potency. We will hereafter remove the misconceptions of those who would minimise its potency.

It has been said:— "The man [1]who has done good or evil deeds of a very serious nature will experience their fruits even here (in this life) within three days, three fortnights, three months or three years" In the same way, it has been said, "*Bhakti* as an *upāya*[2] destroys all sins other than those which have begun to yield their fruits (*prārabhdha*), whereas *prapatti* (*sādhyabhakti*) is superior to *bhakti* and destroys even those sins which have begun to operate (*prārabdha*)". Therefore *prapatti* gets rid of even sins that have begun to bear their fruit (*prārabdha*) and yields the fruit of its own performance. As has been stated in regard to other *vidyās* (forms of meditation: *upāsana*), that the sins committed before and those committed after *upāsana*) will both be destroyed, *prapatti*, which is superior to them as a *vidyā* dest-

---

1. Vihagendrasamhita.

roys (even) the suffering due to *karma* which has begun to operate so that it may not continue the next instant, the next day or the next life in accordance with the degree or intensity of the man's impatience. This is the real purport of the words, "Do not despair or grieve", *mā s'uchah* (in the *charma s'loka*).

### *THE PURPOSE OF ĪSWARA IN MAKING THE PRAPANNA SUFFER:*

(In this connection) the following question may be asked by some who minimise the power of *prapatti*:— "If this is the real meaning, should not the sufferings which are seen in the actual life of a *prapanna* as the result of *prārabdha karma* and the performance of actions which would result in further suffering—should not these sufferings cease (at once)? If it is said that the Lord will grant the cessation of these (sufferings) only if He is prayed to, for it, by the sufferer, the question arises, "Why does not Iswara, who is the well-wisher of all (living beings), grant, of His own accord, the cessation of these connected sufferings also, in the same way as *prapatti* grants incidentally such things as the ability to purify those who are in one's society. We do not see Iswara doing this. Therefore what is said (in the *charama s'loka*) about all grief disappearing should be taken as not literally true, but as (exaggerated) praise of the potency of *prapatti*".

The answer to this question is as follows:— "Iswara is always inclined to bestow His grace. He is eager to confer *moksha* on those who seek His protection even at (the time of) the beginning of uttering the sentence which states *prapatti*. But owing to the man's desire, the Lord agrees to keep him here (in this world), for some time longer. If he enjoys the inferior pleasures of life without any pain (or sorrow or suffering), his desire will never disappear. Nor will the assurance that the realisation of the Lord is truly enjoyable grow in him. Therefore as has been said in the following *s'lokas*:—

"He to whom[3] I want to show favour — his wealth I take away from him. Then his relatives forsake him. So he is ever full of sorrow or pain. If the man who suffers in this way continues to cling to me, I show him that grace which even the gods cannot obtain"; (as has been said in these *slokas*), Iswara avails Himself of those *karmas* which have begun to yield their fruit (*prārabdha*) and which are the cause of these sufferings and punishes these men of hard hearts in order to correct them as a father and the like would do (in the case of such as their sons) with a whip at hand. It is therefore proper to consider such punishments as special favours.

When the king asked whether a disease could be (helpful), Bhattar replied that even a disease could be a teacher for us. Sufferings are teachers to the *prapanna*, because, if his term of life is already unalterably fixed, they would create repentance in the mind and if his term of life could be extended, they would teach him not to desire extension of life. This is well-known in such instances as Kurathalvan (*)

The sufferings are intended only to reveal, to some, their offences with their consequences and then conceal them in order to create utter disgust, disgust like that of Perialvar who says:— "My mind cannot bear the thought of living in *samsāra*, which is like living in a house in the roof of which there is a serpent," so that thereby they, too, might long for the release from *samsāra* which Iswara has made up His mind to confer on them. In such contexts, the aspect of the experience of sorrow or pain is the fruit of evil deeds (in the past). The correction that ensures and that generates (the desire for) performing *prāyas'chitta* is the fruit of the *upāya*, *viz*. *prapatti*.

Among these, some punishments are the fruit of certain good deeds in the past which have begun to operate (*prārabdha*). When

3. Bhagavatam? Varahapuranam? 3-A. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 11-8-3

*NOTE:- Azhvan on losing his eye-sight did not long for his eyes again, as they would make him look at the objects of sense-pleasures.

the crow (Kakasura in the Ramayana) fell (at Sri Rama's feet) praying for life, the Lord gave him his life; the fruit of his *prapatti* was full and complete. Even the punishment inflicted on this wicked crow whereby he lost the sight of one eye was not really of the nature of a punishment. It was a special form of favour (because it would prevent him from doing evil again).

Therefore just as we learn that the Lord's punishment, which is brought about by sins committed in an instant (but) which make the sinner wallow in Hell till the great dissolution (*Bramā Pralaya*), has great potency, so also we should learn that the special form of *praṇāma* to Sri Krishna which is called **sukrita pranāma* has great potency, for it has been said:- "A single [4]*praṇāma* to Sri Krisha enables a man who wanders about in the wild and trackless forest of *samsāra* to reach the boundary called *moksha*" and also:— "Would it be [5]right to say that a single *sukrita pranāma* to Sri Krishna is equal to ten horse sacrifices? (No). The man who has performed ten horse sacrifices returns again to (*samsāra*), but the man who has performed *praṇāma* to Sri Krishna never returns". In accordance with the truths revealed in these *s'lokas*, we should interpret the following texts without circumscribing the potency of *prapatti*, in so far as it does not conflict with the meaning of the *s'āstra* :— "He [6]who performs *prapatti* only once and says, "I am Thine"—to him I grant freedom from fear of all beings. This is my vow", "If [7]you are afraid of sin, O Bharata, desist from all action and remain with the thought that Narayana is alone the object to be attained by all possible means", and "Even [8]if a man born of a low caste performs *prapatti* to the Lord and that only once, the Lord protects him even if he has murdered his father and mother".

4. Vishnu dharma 1 — 18.
5. Mahabharatha : Santi Parva 46 – 163.
6. Ramayana : Yuddha Kanda 18–33
7. Vishnu dharma 66-72
8. Sanatkumara samhita

(*) NOTE: *Sukrita pranama* consists in folding the two hands in *anjali* thrice and in performing *ashtanga namaskaram* twelve times touching the ground with the brow, the nose, the eyes and the cheeks).

"The Lord protects him even if he has murdered his father and his mother" — Only when this has not been committed after *prapatti*, will this *s'loka* not be opposed to the rule concering *prāyas'chitta*. If it be done after *prapatti*, we have already shown how redemption could be obtained. In this way also could be easily explained such passages as this:— "Good men[9] protect those who have sought their protection and who pray to them saying, "I am yours", even though they have murdered their fathers".

## *THE POTENCY OF PRAPATTI.*

There may be some who are followers of our *Vis'ishtādvaita dars'ana*, who are aspirants to *mukti* and have sought the protection of Bhagavan through any one of the following paths prescribed in the *s'āstra*, *viz.*, *karmayoga*, *jnānayoga*, *bhakti yoga* or *prapatti*, but who are still in the earlier stages of *yoga* like **Yatamāna sānjna*, when they have just begun to control the senses. On finding in such men certain diseases like desire for money not completely cured, some to whom freedom from all desires is all important (even more than devotion to Bhagavan) would call them ignorant men unfit to be talked to. But this is improper as pointed out in the *Bhagavat S'āstra* in the sections dealing with the professions followed by those who suffer from poverty. What has been said about those who follow the wrong path should not be applied to those who follow the right path but stumble in it (occasionally) About the former it has been said:— "No gifts[10] should be received from those who observe *dharma* hypocritically for the sake of praise, from rationalists, from heretics and from those who are like cranes (ever bent on catching fish while appearing like one in contemplation). "They are to [11]be considered heretics who consider Bhagavan to be like others. They are unfit for the performance of all (*sastraic*) rites", and "Those

9. Vishnu dharma 106–53
10. Yajnyavalkya Smriti 1 – 130
11. Brihannaradiya

* Described in Bhagavad gita II-58.

who wear matted[12] locks as an ornament and who have shaved their heads but who eat without performing *yajna* to the gods and the like, who are without any purity and who omit the performance of *tarpaṇas* and *s'raddhas* to their fore-fathers (*pitris*)—even by talking to such persons men go to Hell ". (What has been said in these *s'lokas* does not apply to those who have only slipped or stumbled while following the right path).

### *NO OFFENCE SHOULD EVER BE COMMITTED AGAINST BHĀGAVATAS :*

Among Bhagavatas, it is true that degrees of regard have been prescribed for those who have not received the purification by fire* (or who have not done the rites or *karma* ordained for them), who have not the purification due to the wearing of the caste mark (*pundra*) (or who have given up their *sūtra*), who have not had the purification due to *nāma* (or who have renounced their *gurus*, gods and the like), and those who have not been initiated into the sacred *mantras* (or who have no association with good men). But even these will obtain redemption by some means or other (*prāyas'chitta* and the like) (provided they have not deviated from their exclusive devotion (to Bhagavan). The *s'astras* have, indeed, laid down the rule that offences should not be committed even against these (men). What has been said of the potency of *karma yoga* in the following *s'lokas* applies even more to that of *bhakti* and *prapatti* :— " The [13]endeavour that has been commenced in this *karma-yoga* never ends in vain; there is no offence if it is not completed; even a small fraction of this *dharma* redeems a man from measureless *samsāra* ", and " The [14]man who has begun *yoga* but has not completed it never perishes either here or in the higher world. (Is it not clear) that the man who has done a good thing will not meet with an evil end?" Further the Supreme Ruler Himself said to Arjuna and Dharma-

12. Vishnupuranam 3 – 8 – 105
13. Bhagavad Gita 2 – 40
14. Bhagavad Gita 6 – 40

(*) NOTE: the marks of the conch and the discus (*chakra*) made with red-hot iron on the two upper arms).

putra respectively:—"Even [15]if a man is of impure ways, if he worships me without the desire for any other fruit, he is certainly a good man (*sādhu*). He is worthy of esteem, for his intentions are good", and "Even[16] if my devotees are inclined to sin, no sin will cling to them, in the same way as water does not stain the leaf of the lotus".

It has (also) been said in the discourse between Pundarika and Narada:—"He who [17]has sought the protection of the Lord, O best of Brahmins, whether he be clad in a garment of bark, whether he wears matted locks (*jatā*), whether he holds a triad of sticks (like a *sannyāsin*), whether he has shaved his head clean or whether he bears the marks of other *ās'ramas* or whether he has not any of them — (it does not matter) — for these are not the causes that win *moksha*. Even those who have no pity, who have wicked minds and are always inclined to evil ways — even they attain the highest state, provided they have sought the protection of Narayana": "If the devotees[18] of Vishnu commit sins, the sins will not taint them, because they will perform *prāyas'chitta* at once. They purify the whole world like the rising sun." "The man [19]in whom, at the end of thousands of virtuous lives, arises the thought that he is the servant of Vasudeva, who is the Supreme Self in all the worlds — that man will go to the world of Bhagavan. There is no doubt of this. (Such being the case), is it necessary to speak of those who, with the senses under control, have fixed their souls in Bhagavan". In these *s'lokas*, it is stated that, even if devotees of Bhagavan continue to sin, they will doubtless attain *mukti* by performing *prāyas'chitta* and that (this being so) much more easily will sinless men attain *mukti*. Further the great sage declared also this, among other truths, that those who have no devotion to Bhagavan will never attain the desired goal even by

15. Bhagavad Gita 9–30
16. Mahabharata: Asvamedhika parva: 96–46.
17. Itihasa Samucchaya: 33 - (123-124)
18. Itihasa Samucchaya: 27–25.
19. Itihasa Samucchaya 33 - (125–127)

superior deeds of virtue: "Those [20]who do not turn their faces to Narayana will never reach the desired goal, even though they have performed a hundred horse-sacrifices and many hundreds of *Vājapeya* sacrifices".

Since it has been said:— "He who [21]understands Sri Krishna as He is' — even the gods cannot know the extent of his greatness", even the eternal *sūris* cannot, indeed, measure his greatness. Therefore, even if sufferings afflict the devotees of Bhagavan who have continued to commit offences deliberately, they should not be treated with disregard. Has it not been stated as follows:— "By bowing [22]before those who are not devotees of Vishnu, by speaking of Bhagavan with irreverence, and by the vilification of the devotee of Vishnu, (by all these), a man will surely have his fall. There is no doubt of this"? "The man who[23] has stolen the bulb of the lotus — let him vilify *sannyāsins* always; let him treat with disregard the devotees of Vishnu, let him be averse to (the study of) Vedanta, let the man who has stolen the bulb of the lotus be outwardly good, but inwardly wicked; let him hate those who know Brahman, and censure the rites and observances prescribed in the *s'āstras*. Let the man who has stolen the bulb of the lotus be ever perverse in his intelligence and delude those who follow the right code of conduct and who have no firm faith in the *s'āstra* which treats of the *jīva* and the *Paramātmā*".

The author of *S'rī Bhāshya* has, in his *S'araṇāgati Gadyam* spoken of offence to Bhagavan and the like ((*i.e*) offence to His devotees) along with the sins of omission and commission (while they too are sins of omission and commission). This is to indicate that offence to Bhagavan (and to Bhagavatas) is extremely serious, as when we speak of bovine cattle and bulls, the bull is mentioned separately, though it is included in "bovine cattle", simply to emphasise the bull. All sins are, of course, offences against

20. Itihasa samucchayam: 33–180
21. Mahabharata: Aranyaparva: 191–20
22. Naradiyam:
23. Itihasa Samucchayam 12 - (71 - 72)

Bhagavan. So the separate mention of some kinds of sin is to refer to offences against Bhagavan and His devotees. Sri Ramanuja's aim in this separate mention, is to state that whatever offences may be committed against others, if similar offences are committed against Bhagavan or His devotees, they would, by their very nature, lead to more severe punishments just, like treason against kings. The sphere of *samsāra* is, as it were, the nursery to Hell. Such being the case, it is very difficult to find in it people who walk in the right path. So to think ill of those who follow, in regard to Bhagavan, any one of the paths like *karma yoga*, which are like the first steps leading to *mukti*, in accordance with their competence (*adhikāra*), is to commit an offence against the devotees of Bhagavan.

When it is said.—" There [24]is no *mukti* for one who is extremely devoted to the science of grammar (*S'abda S'astra*), for one who sets much store by food and clothing, for one who delights in living in a beautiful house and (so also), for one who is able to allure the minds of the people in the world by one's speech", it means (that there is no *mukti* for them) when there is no devotion to Bhagavan. The same is the meaning of the *s'loka* :— " Those who [25]are addicted to the pleasures of sex and to good food, and those who commit (the offences of) theft, uttering falsehoods and speaking harsh words, are men that have given up *dharma* and the gods avoid them and keep at a distance from them on that account" The same is also the purport of such *s'lokas* as the following :— ' Those [26]whose minds are firmly fixed on the pleasures of the senses while being averse to Govinda — from them, that Supreme Brahman is at a great distance". So also it is said:—" To those[27] who always think of Govinda and whose minds are firmly fixed on Him — to them Bhagavan may be considered to be always at hand". Such passages declare that there will be no delay (in attaining *mukti*) for those who are devoted to Bhagavan and who have, at the same time, given up the pleasures of the senses.

24. Itihasa Samucchayam 2 - 10
25. Mahabharata: Santiparva 305 - 36
26. Vishnu dharma : 99 - 13
27. Vishnu dharma 99–15

Even those who wander about in the disguise of the devotees of Bhagavan without any devotion at heart to Him and who are therefore like tigers wrapped in the skin of the cow for the purpose of springing on cows — even these are to be treated with respect for their appearance and for their names (*Bhāgavatas*), in the same way as Uparichara and others treated such persons as the Asuras, until their inner nature was revealed It is in regard to these actors by profession that (we find) the saying:—"The [28]outward mark is not the cause of *dharma*" and "Though the fruit of the soap-nut[29] tree has the property of rendering (muddy) water clear, yet the water is not rendered clear by the mere utterance of its name".

## *THE UTTERANCE OF BHAGAVAN'S NAME PURIFIES ONLY THOSE WHO DO NOT HATE HIM.*

From the *s'lokas* and Tamil verses that follow, it should not be understood that the mere mention of Bhagavan's name, though in contempt or vilification, will destroy all sins:—"Those[30] (who suffer from troubles), who are miserable, who have no steady foothold anywhere, who are afraid of *samsāra* and who are afflicted with terrible diseases — (all these) obtain freedom (from their ills) by the mere mention of the word 'Narayana' and become happy". "The man[31] who, even without his being aware of it, pronounces the name of Bhagavan, is freed from all sins, in the same way as a forest is freed from deer owing to the fear of a lion", "The [32-A]mention of Bhagavan's name - though it be to call a person who (merely) bears that name, though it be in irony, though it be pronounced wrongly, though it be in derision — (the mere mention of His name) will destroy all sins". "Hari destroys[32] all sins when he is remembered even by men with evil hearts. Even if fire is touched unawares, it certainly burns." "The mention[33] of many of the names of Bhagavan which describe his attributes and actions is

28. Itihasa Samucchayam: 33–123–124
29. Manusmriti 6–67
30. The discourse between Vyasa and Sanjaya
31. Vishnu Puranam 6–8–19.
32. Haryashtakam:
32-A. Bhagavatam: 6–2–14
33. Bhagavatam: 6–3–24

much more (than is necessary). The mention of a single name is enough; for Ajamila, sinful though he was, attained *mukti* by calling his son 'Narayana' at the time of his death" "Kshatrabandhu[34] attained the highest state by the mention of the name 'Govinda' with its three syllables, though he was in the midst of past evil deeds which surrounded him like ants. Why then, should we suffer from *samsāra*, while we have Sri Ranganatha who is so inordinately fond as to be easily accessible towards His servants." (All these passages should not be taken as literally true). They only mean that, if the man has no hatred for Bhagavan, the mention of Bhagavan's name is extremely purificatory, though his faith in Bhagavan is weak, though he utters the name like children and the like without a knowledge of its meaning, though he blabbers the name without any thought, though, his intentions being different, he utters the name as a conventional name or in irony and the like, though he is associated with other aims and though he has faults. Certainly it does not mean that derisive speech concerning Bhagavan and the like would destroy sins. Derisive speech and the like concerning Bhagavan have indeed been counted among the deadly sins (*pātaka*). Has it not been said:— "They who [35]hate the Supreme Self and do not remember Kesava — they will not find any good in bathing in the holy waters — nor those who associate with them (out of regard)" and also :— "The [36]son that hates his father should be looked upon as born to somebody else. He who always hates Bhagavan should be looked upon as being born to a man of the lowest caste"?

It is said in the *Bhagavatam*:-"The Gopis[37] attained *mukti* by love (to Sri Krishna); Kamsa out of fear (of Sri Krishna), Sisupala and other kings by hatred (to Sri Krishna), the Vrishnis owing to their relationship; you (the Pandavas) out of friendship to him and we (Narada and others) by devotion". It states that, in some way or other (fear, hatred, love, friendship etc.), those who are associated with Sri Krishna will obtain redemption, provided they

34. Tirumalai: 4
35. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 336-36
36. Brahmanda puranam :
37. Bhagavatam 7-1-32

have done good deeds in the past. The same idea is found also in the *s'loka* :— " Association[38] with Bhagavan, who is ever pure, whatever be the form it takes, will destroy sins". These two *s'lokas* refer to individuals who had a special competency owing to good deeds done in past lives. This is well-known from the *purāṇas* which relate the earlier and the later incidents in their lives. (It should not be considered applicable to others.)

## *RESIDENCE IN HOLY PLACES.*

The statement (in certain passages) that the parting from life in certain holy places of Bhagavan will help the attainment of *mukti* should be understood as applicable only to those who are not ill-disposed to Bhagavan, though, in their indifference, they may be like animals. If not understood in this manner, it would follow that even those who are bent on doing what is displeasing to the Lord would attain *mukti* (which is absurd).

The passage in the *S'ātvata Samhitā*, which says: "The mind that is impure owing to subjection to the wild senses — that mind becomes pure in the last days by living in the holy places of Narayana" — this passage only means to say that though such men could not realise Bhagavan formerly owing to their addiction to such pleasures as those of the senses which are not opposed to the *s'āstras*, they will attain purity of mind in their last days". This is evident from the context in *Sātvata Samhitā* (where the passage is found. "He whom the *yogis* [39-A]endeavour by their efforts to fix in their minds at the time of separation from the body"- He enters into their minds without any effort on their part in their last moments. This much superiority they have. This is shown also in the case of *prapannas* of whom it is said: [40]" They attain to a clear vision merely by My Grace".

Therefore to those who are inimical to Bhagavan, there is no redemption by these marks which serve their enmity — namely,

38. Sriranga Mahatmya: 8-12
39. Satvata Samhita 7-120
39-A. Mahabharata: Santiparva: 46-139.
40. Saranagati gadya.

appearance, bearing the name of Bhagavan, residence in a holy place, and the utterance of His names ".

Things which are displeasing to the Lord, when done in holy places, contribute very greatly to ruin and this is well-known from many *s'āstras.* This is also due to the might of Bhagavan.

To those who are devoted to Bhagavan, whatever acts they do in order to please Him, will, as in the case of Vritra and Kshatrabandhu, themselves destroy all sins and will be the cause of their redemption by some *vyāja* or gesture.

Such being the case, Iswara, who has already made up His mind to grant, to these devotees (who may have some faults also), the blessings of *mukti* to which they are entitled by their nature, — Iswara will (by some punishment or other means) enable them to expiate their offences. So we should clearly understand that Iswara is the only controller of whom it is said :— "He alone[41] is the Ruler who controls: there is no second controller." - "Know that[42] He is the controller over all: He is more subtle than the subtlest ;" and "He who [43]dwells within the heart — He controls the whole world: by whom else is any man controlled?" (With this knowledge in our minds) we should refrain from treating with disregard these devotees on the strength of what is said in such passages as this :— The slayer[44] of Madhu (Madhusudana) does not remain in the mind of the man which is impure owing to such things as (evil) desires; the swan never delights in water that is muddy." On the other hand, we should feel delighted at any good features that might be found in such devotees, even as in finding water in a wilderness.

It has been said :— "Whatever a man[45] often does with the activities of his body, mind and speech — it makes a man its captive. Therefore one should (ever) perform what is good. So we should never deviate from the right path with the body, mind or speech.

41. Mahabharata: Aswamedhika parva: 27-1
42. Manusmriti 12-122
43. Vishnupuranam: 1-17-20.
44. Vishnu dharma : 9-11
45. Mahabharata : Udyogaparva: 30-56

There is a saying that "The poison tree called *samsāra* bears two (kinds of) fruits which are like nectar — one is *bhakti* to Bhagavan and the other association with those who are His *bhaktas*". Therefore we should feel it a blessing that we have obtained the unattainable privilege of association with those really great men who may appear small (in the eyes of the ignorant) and who have the great good furtune of having sought the protection of the Supreme Being, for this should be the great object of desire during our lifetime here. We should rest assured "that evil[46] deeds can never be ours, as we have been accepted by the Lord (as His servants)", and "That the [47]Lord who wields the *chakra* (the discus) protects us and that (therefore) no one can do anything harmful to us." We should therefore crown ourselves, even here, in anticipation of the empireship of perfect service to the Lord which will be ours in Heaven (*Paramapada*). This potency which has been determined so far should be remembered in connection with such places as indicate the fruit in the three mysteries (*mantras*), as established by necessary consequence.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

The Supreme Self whose greatness is described in the *Vedas*, which reveal the truth, is beyond all limitations and beyond all measure in regard to His glory. Therefore, about those who approach Him and seek His feet, though such things as low birth and certain weaknesses may be found in them, yet it cannot be said that their greatness is, in any way, limited. This truth has been taught to us by those who are highest among men and who are free from all partiality.

---

46. Tiruviruttam : 88

47. Tiruvoymozhi : 10-4-3

*SANSKRIT SLOKA.*

When the eternal Saviour, who cannot, in the least, be affected by such great demons as desire, hatred, pride and the like is present (to save us), that *tapas* or *upāya* called the surrender of the responsibility of our protection (*bharanyāsa*), which is accepted as transcending all other *dharmas* (*upāyas*) in putting down all *adharmas* — that *tapas* is so great that the description of even a fragment of the ocean of its potency is beyond the range of even the ancient Vedas.

*Here ends the second part entitled the Discussion and Clarification of Doubts and Disputed Points*

# PART III

*The Interpretation of the Meaning of the Three rahasyas or mantras by a study of the grammatical construction of the words and sentences.*

## (27) THE CHAPTER ON THE MOOLAMANTRA ( ASHTAKSHARA. )

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

### (1) *THE GOD OF THE MANTRA*:

Of us who, with a knowledge of its meaning, are meditating on the *mantra* taught to us by our *āchārya* which consists of the *praṇava* (*aum*) at the beginning with the word *namas* (*namo*) immediately following it and then the word *Nārāyaṇāya* revealed in the Vedas — of us who are not competent to adopt other *upāyas* and the responsibility of redeeming whose souls has been accepted by our Lord, May He dispel very soon all those obstacles (*past karma*) which stand in the way of our enjoying the imperial bliss of service to Him!.

### (2) *THE SEER WHO REVEALED THE MANTRA:*

May that great seer dwelling in the hermitage of Badarika ( Narayana ), the friend of ( all ) good men, who occupies a certain chariot called *Moolamantra* with (its eight syllables as) its eight wheels and who instructs his reverent pupils, Nara and others (Narada and the like) in the *dharma* concerning himself which is characteristic of *Krita Yuga* — may that great seer confer (His) blessing on us !

### ( 3) *THE MANTRA*:

Let us adore that great *mantra*, the most important of the **vyāpaka mantras*, within which lies imbedded the gist of all the revealed truths found in the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* without any exception.

---

*The three *mantras Namo Narayanaya, Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya,* and *Namo Vishnave*, with the *Pranava* (*AUM*) preceding each are called *vyapaka mantras* for they have the words, Narayaṇa, Vasudeva and Vishnu, which by their etymology, convey the meaning 'Omnipresent' or 'all pervading' (*vyapaka*)

### (4) *THE DISCIPLE WHO HAS BEEN INITIATED INTO THE MEANING OF THE MANTRA BY THE GRACE OF THE GURU :—*

Here a being* who has been blessed by his *guru* with vision sees all the meaning concealed within the *moola-mantra*, without any exception, as if it is a treasure placed underneath a plate made of crystal.

*NOTE: Commentators say that there is here an implied reference also to the author himself who obtained all his knowledge concerning the *moola mantra* from his *acharya*, Sri Appullar :

### *THE PURPORT OF THE THREE MANTRAS AND THEIR RELATION TO ONE ANOTHER :*

So far we have explained the most essential truths which every *sātvika* should remember and established them on a firm basis (of authority *(pramāṇa)* and argument). We will now proceed to show in what ways, in the three great mysteries *(mantras)* which reveal all these (truths), the words and the sentences should be construed (in order that their meanings may be properly understood).

Among them, the first, namely, *Tirumantra (Ashtākshara)* helps us to understand such things as our essential nature, *(svarūpa)* which finds true happiness only in being the *s'esha* of the Supreme Being. By that (revelation), it creates a longing for the Supreme Goal of attainment preceded by the removal of all obstacles thereto and also a feeling of urgency (*tvarā*) (in regard to that attainment) whereby the competency for the adoption of the *upāya (prapatti)* becomes perfected. *Dvaya* reveals clearly the manner in which this particular *upāya* should be adopted by this *adhikāri* with an antecedent longing for the fruit thereof. The *charama s'loka* enjoins (as a *vidhi*) the adoption of this *upāya*. Though it is possible to find all these truths in each of these three *mantras* by itself, from the words themselves and from the sense

suggested by them (*ārtha*), yet each of these three has a primary aim (which is different from that of the others). In the *Tirumantra*, the first syllable (*a*) in the first word (*aum*) expresses, in a concise form, the Supreme Reality who is the Protector or Saviour; in the middle word (*namas*) (*namo*) and the third word (*Nārāyaṇāya*) are to be understood respectively the *upāya* (*prapatti*) and the *Upeya* (the end or goal, *viz.*, service to Narayana); what is stated briefly (in the *Tirumantra*) is made clear in *Dvaya*. (1) The word *prapadye* in *Dvaya* indicates the particular kind of *adhikārī* (namely, one who is destitute of other *upāyas* - *akinchana*) by the first person singular and (2) the needlessness of other *upāyas*, is inferred from the sense, and (so also) (3) the disappearance of the hindrances to the goal is implicit in the last word *namas*. The Charama-sloka explains distinctly these (three things), (that are only hinted at in the *Dvaya*). These three (*mantras*) are to us (men destitute of other *upāyas*), maintenance, nourishment and enjoyment (of the fruit), being, respectively, the causes of knowledge (*jnāna*), practice or adoption (*anushtāna*) and the end or fruit (of our endeavour.)

It has been said:— "The God,[1] Narayana, who is perfect in the possession of the six attributes is certainly in the form of *Ashtākshara* in the mouths of those who utter the *mantra*." So, from the tongue of the *āchārya*, it dispels the darkness (ignorance) in the cave of the disciple's heart and makes him realise his pure and essential nature, which finds bliss only in being the *s'esha* of the Supreme Being. Since it gives (in this manner) real (spiritual) existence to him, the *Tirumantra* is his maintenance (*dhāraka*). The *charama s'loka* is the cause of his advancement in the particular kind of knowledge which would enable him to adopt the final *upāya* (*prapatti*). It is the final word as a precept or instruction concerning the *upāya*, omitting nothing that should be learnt. Therefore the *Charama s'loka* is his nourishment (*poshaka*). *Dvaya* is the cause of the attainment of the Supreme Goal of

1. Naradiyam: 1-32

existence by a single utterance of it and enables a person by constant meditation to feel that he has attained his object. Therefore *Dvaya* is an object of enjoyment (*bhogya*).

*THE PRIMARY IMPORTANCE OF TIRUMANTRA:*

Among these (three *mantras*), in regard to *Tirumantra*, the seer, (*rishi*), the metre (*cchandas*) the god revealed by it, (*devatā*), the germ (*bīja*), the potency (*s'akti*), the colour (*varṇa*), the application (*viniyoga*), the locality (*sthāna*) and *nyāsa* should be learnt from the respective *kalpas* and traditions (*sampradāya*). The greatness and glory of *Tirumantra* are well-known from *Upanishads* like Atharvana and Kata, from *s'astras* like that of Manu, and from various *kalpas* like *Nārāyaṇātmaka Hairanyagarbha kalpa*, *Nāradīya kalpa* and *Bodhāyanīya kalpa*.

It has been said :—" Of [2]all *mantras*, the *mantras* treating of Bhagavan are the highest. Of the countless mantras treating of Bhagavan, the three *vyāpaka mantras* are the highest, so also the eternal *moola-mantra* is the highest of all *mantras*; of all secrets, this is the supreme secret; of all things that purify, this is the most purificatory ". So it is the highest among the three *vyāpaka mantras*; it is the essence of all the Vedas; it is capable of removing all evil influences; it is the means of obtaining all the objects desired by men; it helps in the adoption of all *upāyas*; it can be uttered by all castes, either in its Vedic form (with *aum*) or in its tantric form (without the *aum*), in accordance with their respective competence; it reveals, in no uncertain terms, all the reals (*tattvas*), both those that are pervaded by Bhagavan and that which pervades all (*viz* the Supreme Self); it does not require the help or aid of any other *mantra* and is common to all the forms of Bhagavan (*like Sri Rama, Sri Krishna and so on). Owing to these reasons, all

NOTE.*. They may all be worshipped with the utterance of the *moola-mantra*, whereas other *mantras* are to be used only in connection with particular forms.

2. Naradiyam: 1-11.

*āchāryas* delight in it. The Alvars, too, sing its praise with delight in the following passages :— "Having learnt[3] Thy holy *mantra* with eight syllables", "Those who have been initiated by the *āchārya* into the *mantra* with eight syllables and utter it with the proper *nishtā* are capable of ruling over Vaikunta", "Those[5] who constantly delight in the *mantra* with eight syllables and utter it become capable of ruling over Vaikunta", "You [6]were devotees that sang the name of the Lord saying "*Namo Nārāyaṇāya*" so that country and town might understand" and "By uttering[7] the holy name *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* in the proper way (*i. e.*) without seeking any material gain" etc. etc. The seers (*rishis*) too, have[8] declared as follows :— "Many were the great seers like Sanaka who attained the abode of Vishnu by uttering the *Ashtākshara*", "Just[9] as among the deities there is no one superior to Narayana, there is, among the *mantras*, no *mantra* superior to the *Ashtākshara*"; "Raising [10]my hand and swearing that it is true, I declare this to you! O my children and my disciples, listen. There is no *mantra* superior to the *mantra* of eight syllables. Adore Bhagavan with it always. Show your devotion to Him with it, and worship Him with it. Those who show their devotion to Him by looking upon this *mantra* as supreme will never perish (*i. e.* will not be in *Samsāra*-)" and [11] "Sitting, or lying down, or standing anywhere, we have adopted only the *mantra*, *Namo Nārāyaṇāya* as our *upāya*."

The Supreme Ruler had this *mantra* taught to Pundarika by Narada; he received it as his supreme good; and as stated in the *sloka*; "Pundarika [12]whose mind was ever bent on *dharma* understood that, of all things to be attained, Narayana was the highest and attained *mukti* by uttering the *mantra* with eight syllables : *Namo Nārāyaṇāya*". He practised this *mantra* and

3. Peria Thirumozhi 8-10-3
4. Tiruchanda Viruttham 77
5. Thirucchanda Viruttam 78
6. Thiruppallandu: 4
7. Thiruppallandu: 4
8. Naradhiyam: 1-16
9. Naradiyam: 1-42
10. Narasimha puranam: 18-32
11. Naradiyam:
12. Itihasa Samuchayam 33-130

obtained release from *samsāra*. The supreme Ruler, Himself, initiated Tirumangai Alvar into this *mantra*.

### *IT MAY BE UTTERED BY ALL WITH THE OMISSION OF THE PRAṆAVA AND THE SUFFIX OF THE FOURTH CASE AT THE END:*

When this *mantra* is taken without the *praṇava* (at the beginning) and the dative suffix at the end of Narayana (*i. e*) (as *Namo Nārāyaṇa*), every one is competent to utter it. This may be seen from the *Varaha purāṇa* in the context of the sanctity of *Kais'ika Dvādas'ī*, where it is said: [13] "(Nampaduvan), who was of the caste that eat dog's flesh, came back after pronouncing the words: *Namo Nārāyaṇa*". It may also be evident from the following Tamil verses :— "When [14]the name of Bhagavan is uttered, one should say *Namo Nārāyaṇa*", "Having [15]obtained this excellent garland called *Namo Nārāyaṇa* etc" and "There is [16]certainly a tongue in the mouth and there is certainly also the *mantra* called *Namo Nāraṇa*" which should be uttered at a single breath".

To Brahmins and the like (Kshatriyas), the *mantra* consists of eight syllables including the *praṇava* just as it occurs in the *Veda*. It has been stated: "*Karma*[17] *is said, in the ocean of nectar called Pancharatra, to be of three kinds :— to Brahmins *karma* is *Vaidic* (*i. e.*) to be performed with *Vedic mantras*; to Kshatrias, *karma* is both *Vaidic* and *tāntric*; to Vaisyas and Sudras *karma* is *tāntric*; or *karma* may be *tantric* to all *Ashtākshara*, the *mantra* with eight syllables), *Dvādas'akshara* (the *mantra* with twelve syllables *Namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* with the

13. Varaha Puranam: 139-53.
14. Peria Tirumozhi: 6-10-1.
15. Mudal Tiruvandadi: 57
16. Mudal Tiruvandadi 95.
17. Naradiyam:

NOTE :— * When the worship of Vishnu is performed with only Vedic *mantras*, it is Vaidic *karma*; when it is performed only with the *mantras* found in *Pancharatra*, it is *tantric* and when it is performed with both, the *karma* is said to be both *Vaidic* and *tantric*.

*praṇava* at the beginning) and the *Shadakshara* (the *mantra* with six syllables, *Namo Vishnave* with the *praṇava* at the beginning) — these are the principal *mantras* of Vishnu whose splendour is beyond all measure. These *mantras* with the *praṇava* (at the beginning) are *Vaidika mantras*; without the *praṇava* they are *Tāntric mantras.* To women and Sudras the utterance of the *Moolamantra* should be without the dative suffix (of the word Narayana). So also there is, for them, no *svara*, no *praṇava* nor *anganyāsa* or other rules. To them the utterance of the mere *mantra* (without *praṇava*) is enjoined." In accordance with this, it has been stated further: "The syllable *a* in the latter part[18] of the word *Nārāyaṇa* (*i. e*) *ayana* denotes Vishnu. If the nasal sound of the vowel *m* (*anuswāra*) at the end of the word *ayanam* be added to it, it becomes *am* and this *a* with the *m* becomes the germ (*bīja*) of *moolamantra.* By this addition, the *mantra* comes to consist of eight letters.

Even without the *praṇava*, these *adhikārīs* (women and Sudras) obtain the same fruit or goal and this may be seen from the following *s'loka* :— " Of what[19] use are many *mantras* for the purpose of the fruit desired? Of what use are many *vratas* (ascetic observances)? The *mantra*, *Namo Nārāyanāya*, confers all the boons that may be desired ". The *a* in *am* which has been prescribed as a substitute for *praṇava* (*aum*) should be considered as having, in brief, all the meaning contained in *praṇava*, because the syllable *a* being the first letter is stated (in the *s'āstra*) to denote everything in a concise form. The meaning of the syllable *u* in the *praṇava*, namely, 'only' is inferred from the meaning. The ideas of knowership and the like contained in the third letter of *praṇava*, namely *m* should be understood as being present in the base of the second syllable of *namas* (or *namo*), namely *m.*

*THE MEANING OF PRAṆAVA AND ITS POTENCY* :—

When the *praṇava* is used as an independent *mantra* by itself, it may be pronounced in a single unit or instant of time (*mātrā*),

18. Naradiya Kalpam: 1-57    19. Naradiyam: 1-4

or two units of time, or three or three and a half units of time and its meanings vary in accordance with these units of time to denote either Brahman as effect ( *kārya* ) or Brahman as cause ( *kāraṇa* ): ( *i. e.* ) when it is pronounced in a single unit of time, it means Brahman with the earth as His body; when in two units, it means, Brahman with the *antariksha* (the middle air or sky) as His body; when in three units, it means Brahman with the world of *svarga* as His body; when in three and a half units of time, it denotes Brahman the Pure and the ultimate cause (of every thing). In some *s'āstras* it is said that, when the *praṇava* begins any of the three *vyāpaka mantras,* it should be considered as a single syllable (without any parts as *a - u - m*) and as denoting then the Supreme Self.

[20] " *Praṇava* or the Veda consisting of three letters, existed at the beginning, and the three *Vedas, Rik, Yajus,* and *Sāman* were within it (in *a, u* and *m* respectively). It should be kept as a secret. It is a *Veda* with three letters and is different from the other *Vedas.* He who knows the *praṇava* is a *Vedavit* (one who knows the *Veda* or the three *Vedas*)." The greatness and glory of *praṇava* are well-known from such passages as the above. In the *nyāsavidyā,* the *praṇava* is an independent *mantra* and refers to the surrender of the self, for it has been said: " The *havis* or offering called the self should be taken with the *mantra* beginning *vasuraṇya** and offered in the eternal fire called Achyuta with the *mantra* called *praṇava* ". For the same reason some construe it even here as denoting surrender. Others construe that the *praṇava* should be considered in the *Tirumantra* only as helping to realise one's being *s'esha* (to the Lord), since primarily it gives knowledge of the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the *jiva* being *s'esha.* If so, it contributes a qualification or element of competence for the *upāya* (*viz.* praying for protection).

20. Manusmriti : 11 - 265.

NOTE :* The *mantra vasuranya* in the *Taittiriya Upanishad.*

It has been said :— " By a [21]knowledge of Iswara, the devout *jīva* attains supreme purity ". When we consider *praṇava* as giving only a knowledge of the *s'eshī* (Bhagavan), 'supreme purity' would mean that it removes the unfitness of the *jīva* for the adoption of the *upāya*. When we consider *praṇava* as indicating a knowledge of the *upāya*, namely, Bhagavan, (and not the knowledge of the *seshī*), 'supreme purity' would mean *moksha*. Bhagavan Sandilya explained, as follows, the way in which the meaning of *praṇava* should be considered:— " This Supreme[22] Being is of such and such a nature and the *jīva* is of such and such a nature. *Yoga* is said to be a knowledge of the relationship between the two (that Iswara is the *s'eshī* and the *jīva* the *sesha* )". This meaning has been elaborated as follows:-"the *a* (in[23]*praṇava*) is Vishnu who creates, sustains and destroys the world; the *m* (in it) means the *jīva*, who exists for the fulfilment of the purposes of Vishnu. The *u* (in it) indicates that this relationship between the two can exist *only* between them (and no others). So *praṇava* which consists of three letters and is the essence of the (three) *Vedas* reveals this meaning." The Tamil verse which says, "I am the [24]servant of Bhagavan, the Lord of Tirukkannapuram; how am I entitled to be the servant of anyone else ?" — this Tamil verse also explains the meaning of *praṇava*. The *s'rutis* and the *smritis* describe the three letters of *praṇava* as the essence of the three Vedas.

### *THE MEANING OF A IN PRAṆAVA :*

That these letters have these meanings will be seen from the following passage in *Vāmana purāṇa :* — 'By the first[25] letter *a* in the *praṇava*, which is one of the members or limbs of the *mantra* with eight letters, Bhagavan, who is the support of everything, is denoted; the letter *a* is the origin of all words and Brahman is the origin of all things denoted by these words.

21. Yagnavalkya Smriti : 3 - 34
22. Sandilya Smriti : 5-17
23. Ashtasloki : 1
24. Peria Tirumozhi : 8-9-3
25. Vamana puranam :

Therefore *a* denotes Bhagavan. He is denoted by that letter. This relationship between the letter *a* and *Bhagavān* is seen from the meaning to be appropriate." Sri Ramanuja stated in the *Vedārthasangraha* that by the first letter (of *praṇava*) which is the origin of all words is denoted Narayana who is the origin of all things denoted by these words. From this it follows that Bhagavan is the material and the instrumental cause of the whole world and that, as may be inferred from this, He is both omniscient and omnipotent and has other such qualities. "*a* means[26] negation (No) and when masculine denotes Vishnu". "The letter *a* denotes Vishnu"; "By using[26A] the letter *a*, which is the first name of Narayana, what (an excellent) benedictory prayer has been made!" All this is evident from the Nighantus and the usage of scholars.

When this *a* denotes the Supreme Ruler, it is derived, according to the science of grammar, from the verbal root *ava* which means *to protect*, *to please* etc., (the termination *va* is dropped) and the word that results refers to one who is a protector and so on (one who pleases). Though this root has many meanings, its best-known meaning is *to protect*; further it is this meaning which is required here (in connection with the *mantra* '*aum*'); besides there is no authoritative etymological explanation that it should be considered as having many meanings; so the first meaning given (in grammar), namely, *to protect* is the direct and primary meaning of the word and the other meanings, when required, should be considered as suggested (*lakshaṇā*) by the primary meaning. This is the appropriate way of explaining and the *āchāryas* have commented on it only in this way as meaning the Protector or Saviour. As the meaning 'protector' is not restricted by any limiting adjunct, the protectorship extends to all. The manner of protection varies with the objects of protection as shown by the *pramāṇas* (sources of knowledge). Since the protection is not stated to be based on any reason or condition, it might appear to be unconditioned (*nirupādhika*) but Iswara, who is omnipotent and independent, expects some *vyāja* or action prescribed by His

26. Nighantu. 26 A. Commentary on the Sutras of Panini.

will to be performed by the *jīva*, which would serve as a justification for conferring *moksha* and the like on those who are in *samsāra*. Towards the *nityas* ( the eternal *sūris* ) and those who have already attained *mukti*, the protection is full and complete by way of maintaining what is already present and this is the result of Bhagavan's natural and unconditioned mercy. But this natural mercy ( *kāruṇya* ) is restrained in the case of those in *samsāra* by the condition ( *upādhi* ) of the need for punishment which has arisen by beginningless offence when actions which are displeasing to Him have occurred. *Prapatti* and other *vyājas* have been prescribed in the *S'āstras* only for removing this condition which acts as a restraining force ( on the Lord's (mercy ).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The fact of being the Master makes it appropriate that He should protect; *prapatti* and the like are ( only ) secondary helps. The primary reason ( for protecting ) is the Omnipresent Lord's mercy which is not dependent upon anything else.

As stated in the *s'loka* : "In all [27] *siddhāntas* and in *Vedanta*, it is declared that the Lord protects with His consort Lakshmi, ever by His side, for she is the very embodiment of mercy", the Lord who has determined to grant redemption to all is ever ready ( to do so ) with His consort. The relationship with His spouse for the purpose of protection, which is evident from the *pramāṇas* is derived ( not explicitly from the words but ) by inference from the purpose (of protection) which is evident from the *pramāṇas*. Whenever Bhagavan is referred to, Lakshmi should also be considered as referred to, for it results from the principle :— " If two things are enjoined as necessary, wherever one of them is mentioned, the other should also be considered as indicated " (*Sanniyogas'ishtanyāya*). Thus the *āchāryas*, too, have said, " Since Thou[28] (Lakshmi) art ever inseparably connected with Thy Lord,

27. Lakshmi Tantram : 28–14

28. Srigunaratnakosam : 28.

even the *Veda* does not mention Thee separately." In all *vidyās* or forms of meditation (prescribed in the Upanishads) all qualities and attributes of Brahman which define His nature are to be meditated upon (even though only one or two of them are actually mentioned in the particular *Vidyā*). Similarly this attribute, namely, Lakshmi, who is the most important of all attributes should also be borne in mind. It is this attribute (Lakshmi) which rules out other deities, (for they are not related to Lakshmi in that way) and defines Bhagavan's essential nature which is not dependent upon anything else, as having an excellence which surpasses everything else. His essential nature, form and glories, which do not arise from any other source, acquire even greater splendour from the essential nature, form and glories of Lakshmi, who is His attribute, and shine thereby. This may be seen in the simile; " like radiance which cannot be separated from the [29]sun." And this has been declared by the great sages who understood the nature and person of the Supreme Deity. So also in the word *Nārāyaṇa* in *Tirumantra*, Narayana's relationship to His consort should be borne in mind. This relationship to the spouse is distinctly and explicitly stated in the *Dvaya* (*S'rīmat* — with *S'rī*). In Sri Ramanuja's elaboration of the *Dvaya* in his **Gadya*, it is true that, among the *nārās* in the words beginning with *Bhagavan Nārāyaṇa* (*Nārānām + ayanam*) Lakshmi is included among the *nāras* by commentators. (From this it might be argued that she is also a *jīva* like other *nāras*). But this inclusion is only to indicate Her dependence on Her Lord and *Nāras* means etymologically only "those who are related to *Nara*" without the specification of the form of relationship. So from that, it should not be inferred that Lakshmi is also a *jīva*.

Here the first letter *a* is in the dative or fourth case singular, the (usual) dative singular suffix has been dropped. The reasons for holding that the *a* is in the dative singular (when no case — suffix is seen) are as follows :— (1) In the place which enjoins the

29. Ramayana Sundara kanda 21 - 15.

NOTE :— * Saranagati Gadya.

surrender of the self to the Supreme Self (*i.e.*) the *Taittirīya Upanishad*, the *praṇava* is prescribed as the *mantra* (for doing so); (so it should mean '*to* the Supreme Self (dative)', (2) the *mantra* should reveal the nature of the action to be performed, (3) the self to be surrendered is seen in the third letter (*m*) (*in aum*) and the Supreme Brahman for whom it is surrendered is seen in the base (*prakriti, viz. a*) of the first letter: (4) the person to whom the surrender is made and the object which is surrendered should not be in the same case. Therefore the *a* (which is the first letter) should be considered to be in the case (*i.e.*) (dative) suited to the word indicating the person to whom the surrender is made. The view of perverse interpreters (Advaitins) that *a* and the *m* (in *aum* are in the same case (nominative or first case) and indicate the identity in the essential nature of the *jiva* and the Supreme Self is opposed to many *pramāṇas* (like *pratyaksha* and *s'abda*); besides it would not fit in with the natural and obvious meaning of the word *namo* (*namas*) and the dative of the word *Nārāyaṇa* (*i.e.*) *Nārāyaṇāya* which are uttered along with the *praṇava*. This is obvious also from the text †which distinguishes *praṇava* as the bow, the self as the arrow, Brahman as the target and the act of surrender as the hitting of the target (the arrow and the target cannot be identical). In the *praṇava* in *Tirumantra*, when the intention is the surrender of responsibility (*bharasamarpaṇam*), the dative or fourth case should be considered to have the same meaning as the dative in the *praṇava* considered as an independent *mantra* (*i.e.*) the person to whom the surrender is made. When the *praṇava* is interpreted as indicating the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the self which consists in existing solely for the Supreme Self (*i.e.*) in being *s'esha*, the dative signifies 'having another's interests alone as one's interests'. Therefore it reveals the relationship of *s'esha* and *s'eshī* which exists between the *jīva* and the *Paramātmā*. We should then bear in mind that we are unconditional *s'eshas* (*nirupādhika sesha*) to the Supreme Self, who is the unconditional *s'eshī* (*nirupādhika s'eshī*).

† **Mundakopanishad : II - ii - 4.**

When the Lord who is the Supreme Ruler says, "You are my *s'esha*" and pursues him, the *jīva* f, owing to his egoism, tries to wriggle out saying, "I exist only for myself." Therefore the thought that we are *s'eshas* to the Supreme Ruler will give (spiritual) existence to the *jīva*, who is otherwise, as it were, (spiritually) non-existent. To indicate the importance of this thought (that we are *s'eshas*), the relationship to the *s'eshī* (for *a*) is declared even before the mention of the *s'esha* (namely *m* the *jīva*).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

When the relationship of our being *s'eshas* to the Supreme Being is well established in the mind, the other requisities (for spiritual life) such as self-control and serenity (*s'ama* and *dama*) follow easily as being necessary to it. When that thought is not established in the mind, all the rest serve no purpose and are, as it were, non-existent.

When Iswara is the *s'eshi* of all, He is always (to be thought of as) with His Consort, for it has been said, "The two kinds of[30] glory (*nityavibhūti* and *līlā - vibhūti*) are *s'esha* to me and to her, O Brahma and this is declared in the Vedanta and in my *s'āstras* (*Pāncharātra āgamas*)." So also it is said "Being *s'eshī*[31] is single and it rests with two (Bhagavan and Lakshmi)." In the Agnishomiya sacrifice, the deity (to whom the *havis* or offering is made) is not Agni alone nor Soma alone: the deity of the sacrifice (which is single) is Agni and Soma. So also in this offering of the self, the deity to whom the offering is intended is both (Bhagavan and Lakshmi). In order to reveal this, it was said "Being *s'eshī* is single and it rests with two". When we consider the text* in the *Kaṭa s'ruti*, it becomes clear from the words themselves that the self is *s'esha* to both. To be *s'esha* is to serve the purposes of another without the primary desire to gain something for oneself.

30. Vishvaksena Samhita 31. Somasi Andan - vide before (page. )

NOTE*: KATA TEXT: By the letter *a* is denoted Vishnu, the ruler of all the worlds, and Lakshmi who is supported by Vishnu is denoted by the letter *u*; the *m* indicates that the *jiva* is their servant. This is the definition of *pranava*.

NOTE: f. vide page 89.

The author of *S'rī Bhāshya* has explained it as follows:—"[31A] He is the *s'esha* whose essential nature (*svarūpa*) has, for its sole interest, the promotion of the glory or excellence of another; the other is the *s'eshī*." The genitive dual case ending which is indicated by the *Kata s'ruti* (their servant) is elliptical. The genitive or sixth case, which ordinarily indicates relationship in general, extends here to the special relationship of being *s'esha* to *s'eshī* which is understood from the *pramāṇas*. Or it may be considered that in order to make clear the relationship of 'existing only for them', (*viz.* Bhagavan and Lakshmi), the dative dual termination is present, though in ellipsis. If we take this view, the *s'ruti* which says "the servant of both" explains the meaning of the elliptical dative dual.

If we take this interpretation that the *u* refers to Lakshmi and that the self is *s'esha* to both (Bhagavan and Lakshmi) the 'only' formerly stated to be the meaning of *u* (in *a u m*) is not given by the word itself but is suggested by the context. It comes to this that this self (the *jīva*) is the unconditioned *s'esha* to both Bhagavan and Lakshmi and to no other.

*THE MEANING OF U IN AUM* :—

If, on the other hand, we take the middle letter *u* to mean only' in accordance with Vedic usage, the meaning 'only' is to prevent the doubts concerning the relationship of being *s'esha* extending to any other (deity) unconditionally and this is done by the word itself (and is not merely suggested by the context). Since it declares that the relationship of being *s'esha* to other deities than Bhagavan and Lakshmi does not pertain to one's essential nature, it follows that contact with other deities should not exist to the man who has a knowledge of the nature of his self, and this avoidance of contact extends even to the devotees of other deities. In the chapter on the Ultimate Object in Life, we have already stated that, since being *s'esha* to Bhagavatas is pleasing to the Lord, it does not constitute the offence of being *s'esha* to others.

31A Vedarthasangraha.

Thus if by the force of the word itself (namely *u*), we get the meaning that the relationship of being *s'esha* is ruled out in the case of others, it is also evident that the idea of the relationship not existing (towards the Lord) is also ruled out, (since there is no limitation of time (*ie*) the self is always *s'esha* to the Lord and is never non-*s'esha* to Him). By this ruling out of the non-existence of the relationship of *s'esha*, the substance (*dravya*) called 'the sentient being' is seen to be an attribute incapable of being separated from Iswara (at any time or place) and is therefore shown to be his body, in the same way as non-sentient matter is His body.

*THE MEANING OF M IN AUM:*

The third letter *m* (in *aum*) denotes, primarily, the *jīva* but means also by implication (*upalakshaṇa*) all other things which are *s'esha* to the Lord. That this (*m*) denotes the *jīvātma* may be understood from the following: (1) The letter *m* which denotes the *jīva* should be used to perform *vyāpaka nyāsa* (*i.e*) to perform *nyāsa* in one's body as if it pervades the whole body": (2) The five groups[32] of consonants (in the Sanskrit alphabet) each containing five letters beginning with *k* (क) and ending with *m*(म) denote the twentyfive *tattvas* or reals as stated in the *Tattvasāgarasamhitā* and the like. The Supreme Ruler is always within these reals as their Inner Self" and (3) "The five[33] letters in the *Ka* (क) group denote the five elements (*bhūtāni*), those in the *Cha* (च) group denote the five senses of action *karmendriyās*); those in the *ta* (ट) group denote the five senses of knowledge (*jnānedriyās*), those in the *ta* (त) group denote the five *tanmātras* (like smell) the *pa* (प) denotes the mind, the *pha* (फ) *ahankāra*, *ba* (ब) denotes *mahat* and *bha* (भ) *prakriti*. The *jivātmā* is denoted by the letter *m* and he is the twentyfifth *tattva* or real."

From these it is evident that the *jīvātmā* is different (both) from the twenty-four reals which have the defects of inertness and non-sentience and from the twenty-sixth Real, (namely,

32. Tattva Sagara Samhita.

33. Padmottaram IV, 25, 26, 27.

Iswara) who is the (ultimate) cause of everything, the Saviour of all and the *s'eshī* of all and who is indicated by the first letter (in *aum*).

In the *Tirumantra*, the words, *m* and *Nāra* (in *Nārāyaṇa*), refer only to the attributes, namely, the *jīva* (and matter) as determinate words (* *Nishkarshaka* words) and do not refer to the Supreme Self within the *jīva* (and matter).

If we examine the grammatical form of this letter (*m*), it is found to have been derived from the root *mana* meaning 'to know' and other such roots (*mas* - meaning 'measure') and it denotes the *jīvātmā* who is atomic and who is of the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of *jnāna* and (at the same time) possessed of the attribute, *jnāna*. This is in accordance with the *Brahma Sūtra* (2-3-19), which says "The *jīvātmā* is a knower (*i e*) he possesses the attribute 'knowledge' (and is not merely *jnāna* or knowledge as the Advaitins contend) and this is from the *s'ruti* itself".

Though the *jīvātmā* is said to be, in general terms, of the essential nature of knowledge, yet since this essential nature (*svarūpa*) is known from the *pramāṇas* (*s'abdha* and the like) to be agreeable and pleasing, it is also of the essential nature of *ānanda* or bliss which is a specific form of knowledge

When the *jīvātmā* is said to be possessed of the attribute, *knowledge*, since the *pramāṇas* declare him to be possessed of knowledge without any restrictive word, it should be understood that in the state of *mukti*, his knowledge is all-pervasive and not limited by conditions (or *upādhi*) and without any restriction or limit.

---

* NOTE: According to Visishtadvaita doctrine, many words are indeterminate in meaning; for example *go* or 'cow' may mean the body of the cow, or the soul of the cow or the Supreme Self within the cow as its *Antaryami;* some words are determinate in meaning, for instance 'cowness' (*gotvam*) which refers only to the *jati* (genus) 'cow' of the cow. The *m* (*in aum*) refers to the *jiva* and not to the Supreme Self).

When we consider this natural and pure form of the *jīvātmā*, it will appear that it is free from the inertness and other such defects of nonsentient things and so also from such things as pain, suffering *etc.*, which are found in *samsāra*. Hence in the essential nature and the attributes (*svarūpa* and *dharma*) of the *jīvātmā*, there is also spotlessness or freedom from all impurity or defect (*nirmalatva*). The seeker after salvation should meditate that the *jīvātmā* is absolutely pure and has its enjoyment only in being *s'esha* to the Supreme Being and this may be seen from the *Brahma Sūtra* (3-3-52) which says:— "No, only the state (of the *jīvātmā*) that differs from the state of *samsāra* (should be meditated upon), for that is the state which will ensue (in *moksha*) as in the contemplation of Brahman as He is".

To the *prapanna*, the meditation on the fruit of attainment in *mukti* is useful in creating a desire for that fruit. The forms of meditation (concerning the form of the self) are different in accordance with the difference in the fruits desired and this is evident from the eighth chapter of the *Gītā* and *S'rī Bhāshya* and other such treatises.

Since the *pramāṇas* declare a plurality (or very large number) of souls, this third letter *m* (in *aum*), used in the singular, denotes the *jāti* or genus (and not a single individual), as in the *Brahma Sūtra* (2-3-18) which says 'The soul (or self) is not (generated) for (so says) the *S'ruti*.' (Here the word 'soul' denotes the genus and therefore it really means 'souls' (or self's).

Though it is stated here that all souls are *s'eshas* to Bhagavan in general terms as in:— "All souls[33A] are the servants of the Supreme Self by their very nature" — yet since the individual is also included in the 'all souls,' it follows that for that reason, every one should realise that he is also the servant of the Lord.

Here the knowledge of being a *s'esha*, the abandonment of the conceit of one's independence (of the Lord), the adoption of the

33A. Iswara Samhita

particular *upāya* (namely, *prapatti*) and the prayer for the fruit to be attained, namely, the service of a *s'esha* to the Lord have all to arise in the individual; therefore the individual is the principal (figure). So some *āchāryas* say that the word *aham* (I) should be taken as understood and as being the substantive to which the *m* (which means the *jīva*) is the adjective "I who am a *jīva*". In that case, as stated also in *s'lokas* which elaborate the *praṇava*, "Whatever[34] is mine and I myself are Thine, O Lord, Madhava! I am well aware of this"; since attributes always follow the principal (or the substantive), the qualities and attributes are also intended by implication (*upalakshaṇa*), (2) Other *āchāryas* hold that the third letter itself (*m*) shows the *aham* (or I) by dropping, in the word (*asmat* = I) of the first part *as* and the latter part *at* and retaining only the consonant *m* in the middle, in accordance with Vedic usage. In *Nyāsa vidyā* (as described in the *Taittirīya upanishad*) which enjoins the offering of the self as an oblation to the Supreme Being, the *praṇava* is called the *mantra* (for it) In order that the action to be performed may be made clear, the actual words indicating the Supreme Self and the individual self should be expressed and not remain merely implicit. Since according to the *pramāṇas*, the first letter (*a*) denotes the person to whom the surrender is made and the middle letter (*u*) has some other meaning (either *only* or Lakshmi), by the law of what remains *(pāris'eshya)* the third letter (*m*) should indicate the oblation, namely, the individual self that is to be offered. Therefore it is appropriate to hold that this (third) letter should mean *aham* (or I). Therefore it is that Bhattar commented on the *praṇava* in *Tirumantra* as follows:— "*I* exist[35] only as the property for Bhagavan who is indicated by the letter *a*".

*THE MEANING OF NAMAS OR NAMO IN TIRUMANTRA :—*

So also the *ma* in *namas (namo)* denotes the individual self in any one of the three ways indicated before (1) 25th *tattva* (2) the knowing self and (3) short for *aham*. This *ma* is in the

34. Alavandar: Stotram 53 35. Ashtasloki - 3.

genitive or sixth case ending, and the *na* (which precedes it) means negation 'no' or 'not'. So it is equivalent to *na mama* (not mine). The negation *na* (not) is placed first to indicate its greater importance as in the sentence *drishtā Sītā*[36] *(seen* was *Sītā).* The genitive case in *ma* is a mark of relationship in general *(sambandha sāmānya)* and implies (here) the particular form of relationship (that of a *s'esha* to the *s'eshī).* It is with this idea indeed that Bhattar said, [37] "I do not then exist for myself." The idea contained in this *namas* which has the same purport as the *only* of the middle letter *u* in *praṇava*—for all sentences should be considered as expressive of exclusive affirmation *(avadhāraṇa)*—this idea is of the greatest importance, and it is said in such *s'lokas* as the following :— "The cause[38] of *samsāra* (bondage) is the two letters *mama* (mine) and the cause of attaining the eternal Brahman is the sentence having three letters *na mama* (I am) not mine)." The idea of the following *s'loka* has also the same purport as this *namas :*— "All that is crooked[39] is the cause of *samsāra* ; all that is straight is the cause that effects the attainment of Brahman". (Here the idea that we exist for Bhagavan is straight and the idea that we exist for ourselves is crooked.)

If it is asked "What is it that is not mine (*na mama*)?", the answer is found supplied by the context (*anushanga*) *viz.*, the third letter in *pranava* and is as follows :—

"I do not belong to myself ". In the chapter on **anushanga* (The Context)[40] it is evident that the meaning indicated by the context (*anushanga*) is more appropriate than the meaning arrived at by the insertion of a new word (*adhyāhāra*).— Here *na mama aham* "I am not mine" specifies that I am not mine. As the

[*NOTE: *Namas*. Advaitins might say that the *ma* is in the ablative or fifth case meaning "than I" (There is nothing other than I) and if we consider that the word *kinchit* is understood and insert it, *na ma* may mean "There is nothing else other than I". Here the word *kinchit* has to be understood (*adhyahara*) which is not so appropriate, as *anushanga* ].

36 Ramayana: Bala Kanda: 1–78

37. Ashtasloki. 3.

38. Mahabharata: Santi parva - 13 - 4.

39. Mahabharata: Santi parva 79–22

40. Purva mimamsa.

middle letter (in *praṇava*) namely *u* = only, has already stated that I exist only for Iswara, which negates *seshatva* to *others,* this specification in *namas* indicates that in others oneself is also included.— By the principle illustrated in † *go-balīvarda* (the specification is to show the negation of oneself in special as not having been included in the 'others' stated in the middle letter).

*Aham na mama* ('I am not mine") is the sentence in *namas.* From this it becomes clear that even one's *svarūpa* (essential nature) does not belong to oneself. Since attributes and qualities always follow the principal or substantive, it is tantamount to saying, specially, that one is not the unconditioned master of anything (belonging to one). This is the purpose of the specification.

If we do not take the word *aham* from the context (*anushanga*) and accept the interpretation given above, it would mean that the general misapprehension that certain things (for example, our body and our qualities) really belong to us will be taken away from one's self.

Thus *namas* dispels one's conceit *(abhimāna)* about oneself and about those which appear to be one's by stating that they do not belong to one and the root causes of *samsāra*, namely the notions of 'I' and 'mine' which are false, are thereby removed. The conceit *(ahamkāra)* which is thus removed is a form of illusory knowledge. The word *ahamkāra* is used also to mean one of the twenty-four reals *(tattvas)*, but that *ahamkāra* is not capable of being removed by mere intelligence. It persists with the *jīva* until its separation from the subtle body *(sūkshma s'arīra)*. Though this connection with the non-sentient *tattva* (real) called *ahamkāra* continues to exist, its effects in the form of the disease of conceit *(abhimāna)* and the like which are illusory are cured by medicine in the form of discrimination *(viveka)* resulting from such things as the *moolamantra*.

NOTE† (Though the Sanskrit word *Go* would include 'bull' yet the pharse *go and bull* is often used to emphasise *bull* and draw special attention to it)

Since, from the middle letter of *praṇava*, the notion that one is *s'esha* to any other than the Lord is got rid of, there is no need to state separately that one is not *s'esha* to oneself. Therefore the purport may also be to show that the person to whom certain things appear to be *s'esha* and who appears to be *s'eshī* is not the unconditioned master or *s'eshī* of any of these things. All those things that are *s'esha* to the *jīva* (like his body, his attributes, his wealth *etc.*) are indeed those that were given to him for His own purposes by the Supreme Ruler, who is the *s'eshī* of all.

Those qualities and the like of the *jīvas* which are eternal have become theirs by the eternal will of Iswara. The transitory bodies and the like which are theirs in the impure state *(samsāra)* and in the pure state (after *mukti* when they might take bodies for some purpose or other)—these result from the transitory will of Iswara as the effect of past *karma* (in the case of the former) and without any relation to *karma* (in the case of the latter).

The *praṇava* states that the *jīva* is *s'esha* to none other (than Bhagavan). So it becomes evident that he is not *sesha* even to himself as he is other than Bhagavan; it follows from this that, in the same way as he is *s'esha* to nobody else (than Bhagavan), no other thing is unconditionally *s'esha* to him. This does not appear in the *praṇava*. Therefore this may be the purport of the *namas* that the *jīva* is in no way independent (*i. e.*) that he has no *svātantryam)*. In that case, taking from the context *(anushanga)* the *m* in *praṇava*, it would give the meaning "I am not capable of maintaining or looking after myself"

It is also possible to understand *(adhyāhara)*, the word *svātantrya* (independence) after *na mama* It would then read *na mama svātantryam* (I have no independence). The absence of independence in the case of the sentient being is the inability to act independently (of the Lord) (*i. e.*) without His help. This is because, though in the state of bondage and in the state of release, he acts in accordance with his own mind, he can act only

with such things as the senses given by Iswara and by His stimulation and with His help.

The protectorship of all, indicated by the base *(prakriti) (viz) a* in the first letter of *praṇava*, ensues, in the case of those who adopt an *upāya*, only by stimulating them to the adoption of any one of the *upāyas*. Though the *jīva* adopts the *upāya*, since his activity is dependent on the Lord and since the one who affords protection by granting the fruit (of the *upāya)* is the Supreme Ruler who is gracious, it is only His protectorship of all indicated in the base of the first letter (of *praṇava*) that is confirmed by this *namas*. Similarly Iswara's being the unconditional *s'eshī* of all which is stated by the dative case (fourth case) of the first letter *a* in the *praṇava* (where the case ending has been dropped)— this is confirmed by the interpretation suggested before, which denies unconditioned *s'eshitvam* to the *jīva*. As declared in the *Brahma Sūtra* (2-3-40), "The doership of the *jīva* is due to the Supreme Being as stated in the *S'ruti*", the independence that the *jīva* seems to possess is granted to him in the execution of His own purposes by the Supreme Being who is the unconditioned *s'eshī* of all. The *jiva's* being *s'eshī* to other things is also due to its being given to him by the unconditioned *s'eshī* for the fulfilment of His own purposes. To sum up —

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS*:—

The Lord of Sri is (alone) independent in all things and is (alone) the Master (of all) without being dependent on any one else. Independence without any dependence for help on others and mastership belong to no one else.

This gist of the *praṇava* and of the *namas* has been taught to us by (our) *āchāryas*, in order that we may have the competence (for *prapatti*), namely, such as having the Lord alone as our refuge.

In ordinary life, being master over others and being independent of others are considered desirable, and being a servant and

being dependent on others are considered undesirable. This is merely due to past *karma* as a conditioning factor (*upādhi*). But here (in spiritual life), being a servant (of the Lord) and being dependent (on the Lord) are agreeable to those who have a knowledge of the truth, for they are appropriate and natural to our *svarūpa* (essential nature), as stated in such passages as the following:— "We are all, by[40A] nature, His servants". Thus it becomes evident that the *jīva* exists solely for another (Iswara) and is entirely dependent on Him. So the *jīva* may rightly be employed to do what is pleasing to the *s'eshī*, who alone is independent (and omnipotent). Therefore it follows that the *jīva* should be *s'esha* (and render service) to His devotees, as stated (in the Tamil verse):— "The Lord.[41] who is absolutely pure, has made me the servant of His servants". If the Lord who is the *s'eshī*, and who is independent (and all powerful) is pleased to make us *s'eshas* to His good devotees, it cannot be called improper or inappropriate; nor can it be avoided (or resisted). Since He is *s'eshī*, He has a right to employ us in whatever He desires, and since He is all-powerful, He can enforce it. This idea may also be seen in the Tamil) verse:— "I will never[42] associate with those who think that there is any deity other than Thee. But gladly do I accept (the privilege of) being servant to Thy devotees."

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

Being *s'esha* to His devotees results to the Supreme Ruler from His own desire; but to us, it is a consequence of our being dependent on Him. (Sometimes) even to us, it may come as a consequence of our own desire, for to one who appreciates the worth of (virtuous) qualities, a desire to serve may arise towards those who are great by their virtues. (Thus) service may be done owing to an appreciation of (noble) qualities, like the service of Lakshmana to Sri Rama. The omnipotent Lord has Himself

40A. Iswara Samhita
41. Amalan Adipiran: 1
42. Peria Thirumozhi: 8 - 10 - 3.

said. "I *render service to those who are my kinsmen by virtue of my being independent. I give one half (of what I have) to my kinsfolk and enjoy the other half. I forgive also harsh words (employed) by them towards me". Thus by virtue of these words of His, He has willed that we should be *s'eshas* to Himself and to His devotees. It has already been shown (in the chapter on the extreme limit of the ultimate goal of life) that the service rendered as *s'eshas* by the devotees to one another is due to the will of the omni-potent Lord and is appropriate in different ways (in exalting others and in being exalted by them).

Since the *jīva* who is thus (*akinchana*) destitute (of any *upāyas*) has to receive the desired object from the independent *s'eshī* in accordance with His will, the prayer for protection (*s'araṇavaraṇam*) which is explicitly stated in *Dvaya* and the *Charama s'loka* for winning His favour is necessary and it is here implicit, in *namas* of the *Tirumantra*. Since the surrender of the self and the prayer for protection are inseparable, the word which denotes either denotes also the other and is intended to express both. The word *namas* is itself (often) employed to stand for the prayer for protection, as may be seen from the following *s'lokas*: "The deity[42A] with eyes broad like lotuses that was seen by me before — He has now become (incarnate as) your relative *viz.* Janardana, the tiger among men". "Madhava[43] is both the father and the mother of the whole world. *Seek His protection,* O best among men, for He is capable of protecting (you)." "When Markandeya) gave [43]them this advice, the three sons of Kunti and the twins, O best of the Bharatas, made *namaskāra* to Janardana along with Droupadi", so also in the episode of Damayanti (we find the following); "She considered[44] that the time had come to *seek refuge of the gods.* So she made *namaskāra* with (all) her speech and (all) her mind." (Since *namas* has been used to

* Sri Krishna's words.

42-a. Mahabharata: Aranyaparva: 192-51 44. Mahabharata: Aranyaparva: 54-16
43. Mahabharata: Aranyaparva: 192-56

signify the prayer for protection), it indicates that the responsibility for protecting oneself is not of the *jīva* (*na mama bharah*), where the word *bharah* (the burden of responsibility) is understood. Thus its purport may also be the surrender of responsibility. That the word *namas* indicates the surrender of self (*ātma samarpaṇam*) is also well-known from the following *s'lokas*:— "Of all *yajnas* which[45] are performed with *samit* and such like as an aid, the man who has surrendered his self (*ātma samarpaṇa*) to Bhagavan with the word *namas* is said to have performed the best *Yajna*," and "I bow[46] to Bhagavan, for *namas* (bowing) or *ātma samarpaṇam* to Him enables a man to get rid of his suffering and enjoy whatever he wants".

That the word *namas* has these meanings, *viz.*, "I do not belong to myself; nor is any activity of mine *s'esha* to me; all these are *s'esha* only to *Bhagavān*," is stated in the section on the *namaskāra* in *Nirukti*.

### *THE THREE MEANINGS OF NAMAS: Sthūla, Sūkshma* and *Para:*

Ahirbhudhnya (Siva) commented on the word *namas* as having three different meanings · a gross meaning (*sthūlārtha*) a subtle meaning (*sūkshmārtha*), and a supreme meaning (*para*), in the following *s'lokas*:—

### I. *STHULĀRTHA:*

(a) The act of an intelligent man bowing his body, of his own accord, before another who is higher (without expecting any gain from it) is called *namas*. In the *s'astras*, all sentient beings are spoken of as belonging to two classes, the higher (*Jyāyān*), and the lower (*ajyāyān*). There is no one other than these. The primary meaning of 'the higher being' is He who has superior excellence both in time and (place) and in attributes. Bhagavan is present at all times and in all places and possesses also qualities that are

45. Ahirbudhnaya samhita: 37 - 37. 46. Mantrarajapada: Stotram:
47. Ahirbudhnya: Samhita: 52 (2 - 33).

beyond (all) measure. So He alone is the higher (*Jyāyān*). All sentient beings other than He are lower (*ajyāyān*). The relation between these two, the higher and the lower, is that He is the *s'eshī* and the others (who are lower) are *s'eshas* (to Him). The higher is only One; all the rest are lower and the relation between these two consists in this, that He is bowed to and that the others bow to Him. He who is bowed to is called the higher and the *s'eshī*; the others who are *s'eshas* are said to be those who bow ( to him ). The relation between them and Him is not on account of any gain (expected by them); this relation between the higher and the lower is due to their nature, when the sentient being bows to the Higher Person without expecting any gain and with a certain feeling; that feeling is called *namana* (bowing) (b) *Namanam* (bowing) consists in the thought: "Bhagavan is always my *s'eshī* and I am always his *s'esha*," for it is this *thought* that is the cause of the bowing (of the body). This bowing makes Bhagavan bend in favour to the man who bows (*i.e.*) it makes Bhagavan grant to the man who bows whatever is desired by him. This is certain. Bhagavan, who is higher, observes the bowing of the man who is lower and bends (is inclined) (to do him grace). Since it makes Bhagavan bend in favour, this action is called *namas*: (c) *Uttering* the word *namas* with speech, having this *namas* in mind and bowing with the body—this is *namas* in its perfection (*s'araṇāgati*) and what is different from it in being defective in one or other of the three aspects is called defective *namas*. This is perfect *prapatti* (as *angī*).

"I will tell you its accessories or *angas* in their perfection: Listen. 'The *prapatti* that I perform to Bhagavan, the Supreme Being, is itself my eternal fruit. I desire no other fruit." To have this (thought) is the best of accessories (*angas*). The desire for (other) fruit or gain is opposed to this *anga*. *Ākinchanya* or being destitute is the condition of being without the knowledge or the ability to perform *bhaktī*. This state of destitution is due to false notions (*vāsanas*) that have been persisting in the mind from beginningless time and to the man's being by nature without

independence. It is due also to the mind being covered by the impurities of desire and hatred (*rāga* and *dvesha*). The external manifestation of this feeling of helplessness is called *kārpaṇyam* and it is the second *anga*. The thought that one is independent and could act of one's own accord is opposed to this. The third *anga* is the thought that, though Bhagavan is the Supreme Being, He is merciful to all creatures and is ever bent on showing His grace to them. This is called *mahāvīs'vāsa* or intense faith and the thought that Bhagavan will reward or punish according to one's *karma* and will (therefore) be indifferent towards one—this thought is opposed to intense faith. The fourth *anga* is the thought that Bhagavan is all-powerful and can protect us and the prayer (resulting from it) for protection. This would arise if we give up the thought that Bhagavan, though merciful, is wanting in the ability to protect us. The obstacle to this *anga* is the thought that He would be indifferent to us as He is without the quality of goodness. The fifth *anga* is called the avoidance of what is disagreeable (to Bhagavan). It consists in avoiding actions which would be against the will of the Master. The obstacle to this is doing what is forbidden in the *s'āstras*. The sixth *anga* is the determination to do good to all creatures in as much as all creatures—both those that move and those that do not move—are His body. Doing what is harmful to them is opposed to this. Thus have I explained to you *namana* (or *s'araṇāgati*) which consists of the *angas* and the *upāngas**, which mean avoiding what is opposed to them. This is the gross (*sthūla*) meaning of the word *namas*.

## II. *THE SUBTLE MEANING — SŪKSHMĀRTHA:*

Learn (now) the subtle meaning - (*sūkshmārtha*). Whenever the sentient being considers himself and what is connected with him as his own, the two letters *ma*, and *ma* in *mama* (mine) signify the notion of 'mine' or *mamakāra*. The thought regarding oneself and those things that are connected with

(* NOTE: *Angas* are accessories, *upangas* are those that are accessories to *angas*: here the avoidance of what is opposed to the respective *angas*).

one that one is independent and that these things belong to oneself — this thought has arisen from the false notion which has grown in strength owing to wrong impressions (*vāsanas*) which are from time immemorial (beginningless), This notion can be countered by the right thought *viz.*, *me na* (These are not mine). The meaning of *me na* is, "I am not independent. I am not *s'esha* to myself (but to God). (My) body and other things are not mine; they are *s'eshas* to the Supreme Being." By this right understanding, those false thoughts that they belong to oneself disappear. Owing to those false thoughts that have arisen from false impressions (*vāsanas*), which are from time immemorial (*anādi*) and which have grown in strength by notions opposed to the true nature of things, (we think as follows):— "I am independent: these things are mine." This thought is got rid of by the word *namas* uttered by the man performing *prapatti* with the right understanding that Bhagavan (Vishnu) is the inner self or soul of all. Thus has the subtle meaning been explained.

### III. *THE SUPREME MEANING:* (*parārtha*):—

"Listen now to the supreme meaning (*para*), which is different (from what has been said before). The syllable *na* indicates the *upāya* (or endeavour): *ma* indicates that it is principal or all-important and the *visarga* (final aspirate) *viz.*, *S* (in *namas*) means Bhagavan. This is the meaning obtained from that word (*namas*):— "In order to attain Bhagavan, who is eternal and who is the highest ruler, who is omnipotent and is called Purushottama — (in order to attain Him), Bhagavan is Himself the principal means called *namana*. Thus have I explained to you the three meanings of *namas*."

Since, in the above, it is stated that only the Supreme *S'eshī* should be bowed to or sought as refuge, it is evident and appropriate that the Being to whom *namas* is due is the Supreme *S'eshī*. In order to make it clear who this Supreme *S'eshī* is, the specific name (Bhagavan) is given. In one of the *s'lokas* quoted before,

it is said, "Doing what is forbidden by the *s'āstras* is opposed to this (avoiding what is disagreeable to Him)", and so also "Doing evil to other creatures is opposed to this (doing what is pleasing to Him). The gist of these sentences is that, if at the time of performing *prapatti*, there occurs an act which is deliberate and is disagreeable (to the Lord), there are absent the determination to do what is pleasing (to Him) and also such things as the abstinence in thought from doing what is disagreeable (to Him). If, after the performance of *prapatti*, the man deliberately does what is disagreeable (to Him), he acts in a manner which is opposed to the command of Bhagavan, whom he sought with eagerness (while performing *prapatti*).

In the *s'lokas* cited above, the gross meaning (*sthūlārtha*) is that which appears obvious from etymological derivation according to grammar. The subtle meaning (*sūkshmārtha*) is that which appears from interpretation based on the similarity of syllables on the strength of *Nirukta*. The supreme meaning (*parārtha*) is that which is explained in the secret *s'āstras* (*i.e.*) *s'āstras* which comment on the meaning of the secret *mantras*) with the help of the conventions regarding the meaning of letters. (In the *s'lokas* cited above), in the first (*sthūlartha*) interpretation, the behaviour which is inherent by nature to the *s'esha* (namely, *namana*) and the structure or constitution of *sādhyopāya* with its *angas*, are explained. Then, in the second, they clarify the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*, as this is essential to the aspirant to *mukti* who adopts the *upāya*, namely, that he has no unconditional independence. Then in the third (*i.e.*) *para*, the *s'lokas* indicate the nature of *siddhopāya* (Bhagavan), who can be won by the adoption of the particular *sādhyopāya* and who is also the object to be attained. It may also be understood as stating that surrender (of self) is more important than all other *upāyas*. All these are to be understood in their proper places where the ten different interpretations are given later on.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS:—*

All the *mantras* that are combined with the word *namas* with its various meanings as stated above become operative *mantras* to be employed while surrendering one's self. The *ma* in *praṇava* and in the *namas* lead to the consideration of one's self either by reference to the *Jīva* as a genus (*Jāti*) including one, or by reference to 'I' directly which is like catching hold of the horns (*i e*) (by pointing to what is essential and all-important). Since the consideration that has been pointed out in regard to one, applies equally to others as well, there is no question of any one being the saviour of any other. Therefore since all creatures are dependent (on another) in the matter of protecting themselves and protecting others, protectorship not dependent on others is vested only in the Lord of Kamala (Lakshmi)

*THE WORD NĀRĀYĀṆA IN TIRUMANTRA:*

The word *Nārāyaṇa* here (in *Tirumantra)* explains (in full), by its conventional usage and by its etymology, the unconditional Saviour who appears in the first letter (of the *praṇava*) as the Protector of all and as the *s'eshī* of all. His grace is to be obtained by means of the *sādhyopāya* called *s'araṇāgati* (seeking protection or refuge of the Lord), which is seen either implicitly or explicitly in the word *namas*. He is to be the recipient of the service rendered by the *prapanna*, which is implicit in the dative (fourth) case (of the word Narayana) (*i.e.*) *Nārāyaṇāya.*

Explanation or elaboration is the clarification of what has been briefly stated before in another manner, so that there may be no ignorance, doubt or misconception (about its meaning). This explanation may be seen wherever it occurs [(i.e.) the meaning hinted at in the first letter *a* (of *praṇava*) is explained in the word *Nārāyaṇa* and the meaning of *m* in *praṇava* is explained in the word *Nāra* and so on].

This word, *Nārāyaṇa*, which is of great help in showing clearly the two *tattvas*, namely, the *s'esha* and the *s'eshī* finds the first place, in the *Vishnugāyatrī* and in the *Tirunārāyaṇīyam*, where certain names are commented upon before other *vyāpaka* names of Bhagavan.

[ NOTE :—Vishnugayatri : *Narayanaya vidmahe ; Vasudevaya dhimahi, Tanno Vishnuh prachodayat,*]

(Narayana, Vasudeva and Vishnu are called *vyapaka* names because their etymology indicates that the one referred to by them is present everywhere).

In the *Nārāyaṇānuvāka* which aims at determining the person of the Supreme Deity, who is the object of meditation in all *vidyās*, the word *Nārāyaṇa* is repeated many times, thus showing great regard, for the purpose of declaring that Brahma, Siva and others, who might, on first thought, be considered as the Supreme Deity, on the strength of the presence of their names in the *vidyas* are only the *vibhūtis* (or glorious possessions) of Narayana just like the universe (which attests His glory). This it does by stating them in *grammatical co-ordination or apposition with Narayana (*sāmānādhikaraṇyam*).

It declares that even these, (Brahma, Siva and others) are included in the meaning of *Nāra* (the first part of the compound) and that Narayana is their resting place or refuge.

The potency of this name is well-known from the following passages :— " Those[48] who are afraid of *samsāra* and who suffer from terrible diseases are relieved of their sufferings by merely uttering the word *Nārāyaṇa*, and attain happiness ". " The man[49] in whose mouth is the auspicious word, Narayana, is followed by

(* NOTE :—*Grammatical co-ordination :* The following sentences in the *Narayananuvaka* are referred to here : " This universe is all the deity Narayana : He is the inner self of the universe : Narayana is the Supreme *Jyotis* (Light): The Supreme Being is Narayana : Narayana is the Supreme Brahman : Narayana is the Supreme *Tattva* (Reality)........ He is Brahma : He is Siva : He is Indra : He is Akshara and He is the Supreme Independent Sovereign Ruler ").

48. Vyasa Sanjaya samvada : 49. ?

Narayana even as the calf is followed by the cow." "The word [50]Narayana is always available. Our speech is within our control. Notwithstanding this, the *jīvas* fall into the darkest hell by not uttering the word": "The name,[51] Narayana, confers (on the man who utters it) good birth in a Vaishnavite family: it confers also wealth" "The mother [52] who gives the name, Narayana, to her son will never go to hell." In the *Nāradīya kalpa* it is said:—"Even those who utter the mere word, Narayana, are relieved of their diseases, of their dangers, of their fears and of their sorrows. There is no doubt of this." In another *purāṇa* it is stated that if the number of vowels and consonants (in the word, Narayana) be taken separately into account, it will (be seen to) resemble *Tirumantra* in having eight letters and may be treated as such.

The compound word *Nārāyaṇa* may be split up into its two component parts thus: *Nārāh ayanam yasya* (He to whom *Nārās* are the resting place) and *Nārāṇām ayanam* (the resting place of *Nārās*). The word *Nārās* is here determinate in meaning and denotes only the *nārās* (sentient beings and non-sentient things) and does not refer also to the Lord who is their inner self. Therefore the two words are not in grammatical apposition. Nammalvar distinctly showed the meanings of these two ways of combining the two parts of the word (*samāsa*) in the following two passages by using the word at the end and at the beginning respectively. "He who has, as His *s'eshas*,[53] countless *jīvas* with knowledge and bliss as their attributes and with self-luminousness as their nature and also His own noble qualities—that Narayana," and "Narayana[54] is the Lord of all the seven worlds". In this are implicit (Bhagavan's) possessing the two kinds of attributes, namely, freedom from defects and possession of all auspicious and noble qualities and, likewise, His possession of the two *vibhūtis* (glories), namely *Līlā Vibhūti* (this (material) Universe) with all the

50. Sudarsanakalpam.
51. Peria Tirumozhi 1–1–9.
52. Perialvar Tirumozhi 4–6–1.
53. Tiruvoymozhi: 1 - 2 - 10.
54. Tiruvoymozhi: 2 - 7 - 2.

sentient and nonsentient beings in it) and *Nitya Vibhūti*, (the transcendental region of eternal glory with all that it contains). It should be borne in mind that this *nārās* includes the queen, the ornaments, the weapons, the attendants, the furniture and the like, the door-keepers, the retinue and such others.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS*:

In the word *Nārāyaṇa*, are contained all the attributes (of Brahman) which are established in (the four chapters) of the *Sārīraka Sāstra* (*Brahma sūtras*), namely, His being the cause of the Universe, the irrefutability of the proposition that He is the cause, His being the *upāya* for the attainment of *mukti* and His being the object of attainment (in *mukti*). All this has been explained by Bhattar in His *Nitya* in the words beginning with "Knowledge, bliss, purity and the like."

*THE MEANING OF NĀRĀS*:

"I created the waters,[55] which are called *nārās*, and lay within them. Therefore am I called Narayana." "The waters are called[56] *Nārās* because they were born of *Nara* (*i. e.* Bhagavan). They were at first His abode. Therefore is He called Narayana." In these two *slokas*, the waters refer by implication (*upalakshana*) to the other *tattvas* (reals) as well. This is evident from such passages as the following :– "The [57]*tattvas* or reals had all their origin from *Nara*. Therefore are they known as *Nārās*. To Him they are the abode, therefore is He considered to be Narayana." In this interpretation of the word as a grammatical compound *Bahuvrīhi samāsa* (*Nārāh ayanam yasya*), it is stated that the *tattvas* had their origin from *Nara* and are therefore called *nārās*. From this it follows that, as stated in *Mahopanishad* and elsewhere, Narayana is the cause of all (things and beings) including Brahma and Isana (Siva) in every way (*i. e.* the material cause and the instrumental cause). The word *ayana* (resting place) is derived

55. Varahapuranam.
56. Manusmriti: 1 - 19.
57. Mahabharata: Anusanikaparva: 186-7

in this way:—'*Īyate iti*' *ayanam*'. That which is pervaded is *ayana* (the passive voice being used for deriving the word). This declares that He pervades all, as they are all pervaded by him and that in order that He may do so, He has unparallelled subtleness (*sūkshmatva*). *Ayana* may be derived also in another way: *Īyate asmin iti*: (That in which it is), in which case it would mean that in which everything rests. The word Narayana may be considered also as a compound of the *tatpurusha* type (*tatpurusha samāsa*), in which case it would be split into *Nārāṇam and ayanam* (the abode of *Nārās*). It is true that the compound word should then be in the neuter gender *Nārāyaṇam*, but by the authority of *nirukti*, the masculine form *Nārāyaṇah* is not improper. The *pramāṇas* are the following:— "He is also [58]called Narayana, for He is the resting place or abode of *Nārās*". "The[59] multitude of all *jīvas* is called *Nārās*. Since Bhagavan is to be attained by them and is also the *upāya* for attaining Him, He is called Narayana". "*Nāra*[60] is so called because it means the multitude of *jīvas* which are indicated by the word *nara*. I am the goal to be attained by them; I am also the *upāya* for that attainment. Therefore am I called *Nārāyaṇa* by the seers." "The [60]wise call the multitude of *jīvas* by the name *Nāra* He is called Narayana because He is their *ayana* (abode or resting place). Therefore those who are thoroughly conversant with the Vedas and the Vedanta declare Him to be the kinsman, the mother, the father, the *guru* and the abode or resting place"

*THE DERIVATION OF THE WORD NARA:*

The verbal root *rīñ* means 'to perish'; so *ra* (in *nara*) denotes non-sentient things (*i. e.*) matter which perishes (*i e.*) changes its essential nature (*svarūpa*). *Nara* therefore, denotes those that do not perish or change their essential nature (*i. e*) *chetanas* (sentient beings, using the *na samāsa* on the analogy of words like *Naga* - which means 'mountain', for it does not (*na*) go

58. Mahabharata: Udyoga parva 69-10 60. Padmottaram:
59. Padmottaram:

or move (*ga*) and *naika*, *na-eka* "not one" (*i e.*) 'many'. So *Nara* means sentient beings only; *nāra* means the multitude of *naras*. Their *ayanam* (abode or resting place) is Narayana. This declares that He who has under His control the three kinds of *chetanas* or sentient beings (the bound, the released and the eternal) and also nonsentient things, their essential nature (or existence) their sustenance, and their activity—He is, to the three kinds of multitudinous souls (the bound, the released and the eternal) who are denoted by the word *nara*, the Dispenser of what they desire. It says also that since He is blissful, He is, of His own accord, the *upeya* (*i. e.*) the object of attainment and is also the support or resting place (*ādhāra*), for it is said, "Thus has[61] it been explained how the three worlds have Vishnu as the *ādhāra* (resting place or abode)" and "He [61A] has entered into the three *lokas*, *viz.* the non-sentient, the sentient and the released souls and supports them without undergoing any change."

How these meanings are traceable in the word *ayana* will now be explained :— The word *ayana* may be derived from the verbal root *iṇ* (which means to go), in three ways: (1) *īyate anena iti ayana*). *Ayana* is 'that by which or with which one goes, where it refers to the instrument (*karaṇa*) or aid. (When derived in this way) Iswara becomes the *upāya* or means (2) *īyate asau iti ayana)* "That which is reached." In this derivation Iswara becomes the *upeya* or object that is reached or attained: (3) *īyate asmin iti ayana):* "that in which it rests." In this derivation Iswara becomes the support or *ādhāra* on which everything rests. *Ayana* may also be derived from the verbal root *ay*, which means 'to go."

It is evident that Iswara has in Him the qualities necessary for being the *upāya*, the *upeya* and the like, *viz.*, easy accessibility *(saulabhyam)* and being supreme *(paratvam)*. When *ayana* means 'abode', if we take *Nārāyaṇa* to be a *bahuvrīhi* compound (*Nārāh Ayanam Yasya*) (He whose abode is *Nārās*), it is consi-

61. Vishnupuranam: 2 - 13 - 2. 61A. Gita: 15-17.

dered to indicate that Narayana pervades all things and beings within them *(i. e.)* that He is immanent within them. If we take *Nārāyaṇa* to be a *tatpurusha* compound (*Nārāṇām ayanam*: the abode of *Nārās*, the (compound) word indicates that He pervades them from without (they being within Him *(i. e.)* that He is transcendent. These two are declared in the *s'rutis (i. e.)* in *Nārāyaṇānūvākam*) Immanence (or *antarvyāpti)* means being present inseparably connected with other things and beings in such a way that it cannot be said that He is not present where they are: Transcendence *(bahirvyāpti)* means being present also in places where they are not present. Such things as Time (*Kāla*) are omnipresent (*vibhu*). So it should not be stated that Iswara is outside of them. When it is said "Narayana[62] who is smaller (*aṇiyān*) than all the smallest; the meaning of the word *aṇu* is not 'of small size' but 'subtle'. So the passage really means: "Narayana who is subtler than all the subtle things". It means that owing to His being subtle nothing can prevent Him from being within them.

In the *s'ruti* (which says "He is smaller than the grain called *s'yāmāka*), the purport is that He is of the size of the object within which He is present (*i. e.*) of the measure of the *upādhi* or conditioning factor, and this is distinctly stated in the *Brahma sūtras* and their commentary (*S'rī Bhāshyam*). Being full and complete in every object, on the part of One who is both immanent and transcendent, means that that aspect or phase of His which is within any one *upādhi* or conditioning factor is capable of (creating, sustaining and destroying) and doing such other things to all things and beings. It does not mean that His essential nature is all contained (and exhausted) within any one object (to the exclusion of all others). If we understand it in that sense, it would be opposed to His transcendence. If we explain this by saying that Iswara has the power of bringing together those which cannot be brought together—(*aghatitaghatanā s'akti*), it would be acceptance of the position of other systems (like Bhaskara's and Yadava-

62. Vishnupurana: 1-9-41.

prakasa's), which maintain the possibility of bringing together things which are opposed to each other (Bhaskara and Yadavaprakasa say that difference and non-difference can coexist). Here in *Tirumantra*, when the Supreme Ruler of all is indicated by the first letter (of *praṇava)*, the base *nara* of the word *Nārās* and the word *ayana*, all these words are purposely used to indicate His being the Protector and His being the (ultimate) cause (in *a*), His being eternal and His being the *netā* (guide) (in the word *nara*) and His being the resting place or support and the inner self (in the word *ayana*) in different ways. (It should not be thought that these three mean the same thing and that two of them are therefore redundant).

If it be asked: "While the *Chetana* or sentient being is already indicated by the third letter of *praṇava* (*m*), why should it be mentioned again in the word *Nara* (in Narayana)". The answer is as follows: "I do not exist[63] without Thee, (my support); Thou dost not exist without me, (for I bring out Thy character:)" "Rama's younger brother (Lakshmana), and Lakshmana's elder brother". (In the two passages mentioned above, there is apparent repetition, but it is not a fault since it serves a definite purpose). (In the first passage), the first part of the sentence emphasises the importance of the *S'eshī* and the second emphasises the importance of the *s'esha*; so also (in the second passage) Rama's importance is hinted at in Ramanuja (Rama's younger brother) and Lakshmana's importance is hinted at in *Lakshmanapūrvaja* (Lakshmana's elder brother): Thus each is characterised by the other. In the *praṇava*, the *s'esha's* importance is prominent as in the chariot of Arjuna (where Arjuna is prominent and Sri Krishna is not, being only the charioteer); in the word *Nārāyaṇa*, the *s'eshi's* importance is prominent as in the *Rāsamandala* (the *Rāsakrīdā* described in the *Bhāgavatam*), where Sri Krishna is all-important and the Gopis not so.

Even in the *praṇava*, though verbally the *jīva* is prominent, the prominence, so far as the purport is considered, is of the Protector or Saviour.

63. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi: 7

The *jiva* who appears in the *praṇava* as of the form (*ākāra*) of *jnāna*, both in his essential nature and in his attribute, and also as being atomic (*aṇu*), is described in the word *Nāra* as eternal (without change or deterioration.) Further since *Nārāh* means 'the multitude of *naras*', it makes clear the fact of the *jīvas* being different from one another. If (on the other hand) we take the word *Nārāh* to mean those who have their origin from *Nara* (Bhagavan), it indicates that the *jīvas* have Brahman for their cause (in so-far as their embodiment is concerned). Owing to these additional meanings appearing in the word (Narayana), the two words serve a purpose (and are not redundant).

(When the word *Nārāyaṇa* is taken as a *bahuvrīhī* compound which can be split into *Nārāh ayanam yasya*), the word *ayana* is in grammatical co-ordination with *Nārāh*. By the word *ayana*, such ideas as their (*nārāh*) being pervaded by Bhagavan are to be understood. The meaning of the *s'ruti**[63A] that in regard to many *chetanas* who are eternal, one *Chetana* who is eternal is the cause of their attaining the desired objects—this meaning may also be seen here.

It is true that the *jīva* is, according to the *pramāṇas*, eternal. When he was described before as taking his origin from Brahman, what was meant was that, in respect of his body which is his attribute, the origin was from Brahman (but not his essential nature, which is eternal.)

The other interpretations which are given in *kalpas* like *Nārāyaṇātmaka* are also similar to these.

In the *s'loka* :— "Both sentient[64] beings and non-sentient things which are all different from Vishnu are called *Nāram*. He who has *nāram* as His *ayanam* (abode or resting place) is Narayana"—(in the light of this *s'loka*) what was stated before (in *Pādmottaram*), *viz.*, *Nārāh* is the collection of all persons" should

63A. * Katopanishad: II-5-13 64.

be taken in a wider sense (*upalakshana*) to include also the collection of all *tattvas* (non-sentient included). Because even non-sentient matter is not perishable in its essential nature (*svarūpa*) and also owing to the continuity (*pravāha*) of the different states (*avasthās*) into which it changes, (even) non-sentient matter is eternal. *Nārāh* means therefore by implication (*upalakshana*) all the *tattvas* which are eternal and which are denoted by the word *Nara*.

"*Nara* means also *Nārāyaṇa* for the following reasons :— (1) While pervading all (beings and things), He (*i. e.*) Narayana is *na ra* (one who does not change or deteriorate), for He is not tainted by the faults or impurities in them and by the sufferings which might be caused by them: (2) the verbal root *nr* means "to lead": He who leads (souls) is *Nara* : (3) In the *Sahasranāma*, Jahnu, Narayana and *Nara* are said to be the names of Bhagavan: (4) In the passage, 'The[65] waters are the sons of *Nara*, the word *Nara* indicates only Narayana and this is evident from the sentence in *Vyāsasmriti* :— "The waters took their origin from Narayana and they alone became afterwards His *ayana* or resting place". So the eternal and Supreme Ruler who leads all (to Himself) is called by the name *Nara*.

In the *Ahirbudhnyasamhitā* (we find the following *slokas*):- "Those that are related to *nara* are *nārāh*. That *nara* is Purushottama. It is He that confers knowledge on those that have sought His protection. It is He that dispels all (their) ignorance. Wherever He may be, He does not undergo any change. Hence He is called *Nara*, because He is always the same (*na ra*), Sentient beings and non-sentient things that are related to Him are His *seshas*. They are supported by Him, controlled by Him and created by Him. He has entered into them for supporting them. Therefore are they called *Nārāh* (because they are supported, created and controlled by *Nara*). He controls all *nārās*;

65. Manusmriti: 1 - 10.

66. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: (52 - (50 - 54)

that is, by being within them, He pervades them in order to do such things as sustaining them. The *nārāh* are helpful (to us) in understanding Him, for, by their existence is His existence understood. He is the *ayana* or abode of *nārās* and they are always His abode. To souls that are *nārāh*, He is the supreme end to be attained and also the means or *upāya* of attaining Him". This interpretation makes it clear that those attributes which define the essential nature of the Supreme Being such as (*satyam*, *jnānam* and *ānandam*) and the qualities or attributes of the essential nature so defined, such as compassion, His activities and the specific forms assumed by Him and likewise the three kinds of sentient beings, (the bound, the released and the eternal) and all non-sentient things — all these are meant by the word *nārāh*. From all this it may be inferred that He has the attribute of being the support of all except Himself. Hence it declares also that He stands by Himself and in Himself (alone). From this, the delusion maintained by men of perverted vision (Advaitins) that Purushotama, who pervades, supports, controls and masters them and the *nārās* who are related to Him are identical in their essential nature—this delusion will disappear, since it is evident that He is the soul of all and that He has such glories as that of being denoted by all words.

The word *nara* (meaning ' one who does not change ') brings out the meaning of the clarificatory texts in the *sruti* (where Brahman is declared to be *satyam*, the Real that is unchanging). The word *nāra* which means those things which have their origin in *Nara* as declared in the passage :— " Those reals or *tattvas* that are born of *Nara* are called *nārāh* "—this word brings out the meaning of the *sruti* that declares Brahman to be the ultimate cause of all; the word *ayana* brings out the meaning of the texts prescribing forms of meditation or worship (as leading to the attainment of ends desired by men).

Such texts as those in the *Subālopanishad* declare that the Supreme Being who is the inner self of all and who has all kinds

of kinship (to us) is Narayana. (By this declaration) these passages state that the Supreme Being is no other deity than Narayana.

Those who are relatives in the world became relatives (to us) by the will of Bhagavan. "O, Best of[67] deities, Thou art my mother. Thou art my father: Thou art my kinsman: Thou art my *guru*: Thou art my learning: Thou art my wealth. So Thou art my all". The Lord is my[68] master who is my benefactor, He is my father, my kinsman, my king." "Thou[69] art the world's father, its mother, its beloved son, its affectionate friend, its well-wisher and its *guru*: Thou art the goal to be attained and also the *upāya* or means by which it is to be attained. I am Thine, I am sustained by Thee I am Thy servant. I am one who considers Thee as the highest benefit. I am one who has performed *prapatti* to Thee. Therefore the burden of protecting me is Thine". The Supreme Ruler is thus one who is the unconditioned relative in every form. If He is pleased (with us), there will be no one who will be opposed to us, for it has been said:— "He from whose[70] favour all these people will become favourable (to us)—that Rama is now soliciting the favour of Sugriva, the best of monkeys", and "When Kesava,[71] the best of deities, who loves His devotees, is pleased, (with a man), his mind becomes clear thereby and all creatures–those that move and those that do not move—become favourable to him". "When [71A] Bhagavan who is the God of all gods and who controls even Brahma is gracious, all the three worlds become favourable". "Iswara is, by His very nature, "the well-wisher[72] of all creatures". If He is (at any time) differently disposed, it is due to the *upādhi* or circumstance of the *chetana* (or sentient being) having disobeyed His command. Even that disposition (of Iswara's) will change (and become favourable) by some little gesture or consideration (*vyāja*). Have they not

67. Gandhari's words.
68. Peria Tirumozhi: 1 - 1 - 6.
69. Alavandar: Stotram: 60.
70. Ramayana· Kishkindha kandam:4-21.
71. Ithihasa samucchayam: 33 - 141.
71A. Narasimha puranam.
72. Bhagavad Gita: 5 - 29.

declared :— "Even [73]after approaching Sri Ranganatha who is so mad as always to take pity on His servants, why do we still continue to be afflicted by *samsāra*?"

## *THE MEANING OF THE DATIVE (FOURTH) CASE OF THE WORD NĀRĀYAṆA (i. e.) NĀRĀYAṆĀYA:*

We will now set forth the meanings of the fourth case such as "for the sake of some one" which will correspond with the meaning of the sentences to be shown hereafter :

Considered in the obvious and ordinary way, it may be thought that the fourth case is used because of the word *namas* (which governs the fourth case (according to grammar). In that view there is nothing noteworthy in the use of the dative case. This is the part of the *Tirumantra* which is the cause of the attainment of the fruit (desired), for it has been said :— "That part of[74] the *mantra* (*moolamantra*) - which remains after the sixth letter counting from *namas* (*i. e.*) *ṇa* and which is after the fifteenth letter counting the consonants of the alphabet beginning with *ka* (*i.e.*) *ṇa*, and leaving the consonantal part of *ṇa*— that part which remains after the *ṇ* in *Nārāyaṇāya*, (*i. e.*) *āya*, is called the potent part of that *mantra*.' This part is concerned with the attainment of the fruit. According to some interpretations, the prayer for the attainment of the fruit is found here. There is no difference of opinion in regard to the statement that the meanings of a word differ in accordance with the purpose, the context, the mark or sign, the propriety, the locality and the time of its use and not by the mere word as such. One of the meanings of the fourth case that are accepted is *sampradāna* (*i.e*) to make the word indicate the person to whom a thing is given and who thereby becomes its *s'ēshin*. Here in the fourth case *Nārāyaṇāya* in *Tirumantra*, it is true that what does not belong to Iswara is not given to Him, for the *jīva* is always Narayana's *s'esha* and belongs to Him. So it might be thought that the *sampradāna* which is indicated by the fourth case does

73. Tirumalai: 4. 74. Naradiyam: 1 - 59.

not apply here. But in as much as the *jīva* offers to Iswara what already belongs to Him for protection by Himself, it may be held that the fourth case indicates *sampradāna* and Ahirbudhnya (Siva) commented in this manner on the dative or fourth case in the *Vyāpaka Mantras* :—

"The [75]surrender or offer of the self which is shown to be subordinate or *s'esha* is indicated by the fourth case in such words as Vishnu (*i. e. Namo* followed by *Vishnu*). When the question is asked: "To whom is this self which is subordinate offered or surrendered for the sake of protection", the answer is "to Vishnu". Thus Vishnu is indicated by the fourth case". This is a commentary also on the fourth case in words like Narayana as the *s'loka* says 'in such words as Vishnu'.

In this *Tirumantra*, the meanings of the seven sacred letters beginning from *na* have been separately stated in the *mantra-smritis* and these meanings have been summarised as follows by some *āchāryas* in passages like the following :— "The meaning of *na* is looking after the welfare of all. helping to incline the mind (of the *jiva*) towards *Paramapada* and destroying those unworthy qualities of the self which are opposed to it. Since the letter *ma* signifies doing what is good to those who have sought (Him), helping to expand their attributive *jnāna* (knowledge), and securing for them the respect of others : these are said to be its meanings by those that know. The letter *nā* signifies giving up scepticism, rendering service always to Bhagavan and doing the work of the *āchārya* which consists in leading the *s'ishya* to *Paramapada*. These benefits will, in the opinion of those that know the *mantra*, accrue to those that meditate on this letter. Those that meditate on the letter *rā* will acquire the love of the Lord, give up the love of those that are other than the Lord and protect the kingdom (from evils). By the letter *ya*, wise men acquire the eagerness to adopt the *Yoga* necessary for attaining Bhagavan and also its fruit.

75. Ahirbudhnya Samhita : 52 - (35 - 36).

From the letter *ṇā* one acquires the desire to praise the Lord and the command of language necessary for praising Him. The letter *ya* causes dread in (the minds) of Yakshas, Rakshasas, Vethalas and goblins (*bhūtas*) Those that know the *mantras* have thus described the function of the different letters ".

Thus *Tirumantra* which has been rendered free from the stain arising from perverse controversialists with the help of a careful study of the interpretations derived from grammar, *nirukta* and the like - will, like a mirror, reveal clearly the essential nature of the Supreme Being, and also whatever is difficult to see in regard to one's own essential nature.

## *THE ATTRIBUTES OF BHAGAVĀN TO BE MEDITATED UPON WITH REFERENCE TO TIRUMANTRA*:

When we reflect in accordance with the *pramāṇas*, on the essential nature of the Supreme Being, who is the deity indicated by this (*mantra*) in all the forms which are explicitly stated and which are also implicit in this *mantra*, we should reflect on the following qualities of His in principal and on other excellent traits connected with them:— such qualities as His being the protector: His protectorship being the result of His very nature: His protectorship extending to all. the many ways of His protection, corresponding to the nature of the thing to be protected, His being the protector at all times, His being the protector in all places, His protection being of all kinds, His protection being directed by His own interest, the omniscience so essential for a protector, His omnipotence, the protection being irrevocable by any except His own will, the irresistibility by others of His protection, His supreme mercy, His expecting an occasion for protection, His requiring from the *jīva* just a pretext or *vyāja* for extending His protection, His accessibility to all those who have sought His help, His nature being such as may ever be relied on (for succour), His having as His attribute (Lakshmi) who will recommend the pardon of those who have committed offences (17), His being the *S'eshī*, His being the *Seshī* under all conditions and at all times and to all,

His freedom from being *s'esha* to any one else, His being the *s'eshī* to those who admire His attributes and qualities, His being the *s'eshī* in association with His consort, His being without equals or superiors, His being worthy of the surrendering of the self as an offering (*havis*), His being different from non-sentient matter, from souls in bondage, from souls in *mukti* and from the eternal *sūris* (*nityas*), His being the cause of others being *s'eshis* in relation to certain things (28), His being an independent doer, His being capable of inspiring *jīvas* with such qualities as knowing, His being the inspirer of all activities, His not being inspired by any one else, His permitting of what is being done, His being the witness of all *karmas* or rites done, His co-operation (in *karmas*), His inducing those who have sought succour to do what is pleasing (to Him), His inducing them to do what is beneficial (to themselves), His being the unconditional object of worship, His readiness to be at the disposal of others (when they have done the right thing), His being the *Siddhopāya* ever ready to redeem (the *jīva*), His being the cause of the *jīva* adopting the *sādhyopāya* (*bhakti* or *prapatti*), His commands being expressed in the *s'rutis* and *smritis*, His being the ruler who punishes (the evil doer), His equal treatment of all, His being sympathetic to those who seek His help, His being the cause of *avidyā* and the like, His being incapable of *avidyā* and the like (*karma*), His readiness to dispel *advidyā* (ignorance) of those who have sought His protection (48), His being free from any change in His essential nature, His being free from any change in His character or qualities, His readiness to lead all (the *jīvas*) to the attainment of Himself, the creation maintenance and destruction of the world being His *līlā* or sportive activity (52), His being the principal subject of all Vedanta (Upanishads), His being the material cause of everything, His being the instrumental cause of everything, the irresistibility of His will, His having all (beings and things) as His body, His being denoted by all words, His adoration being performed by means of all *karmas*, His being the grantor of the fruits of all *karmas*, His being the kinsman to the *jīva* in every form, His universal per-

vasiveness, His unsurpassed subtleness, His being the support of everything, His being His own support, His being of the nature of *satya*, His being of the nature of *jnāna*, His infiniteness, His being of the nature of bliss, His being pure (and spotless) His possession of countless and unnamed attributes in His essential nature which has been defined by certain specific attributes like *satyam, jnānam, ānantam, anandam, amalatvam,* His having an eternal, divine and auspicious form, His having states like *Para* (the supreme) *Vyūha* and others, His incarnations being *satya*, (facts of history), His possession of His own *svabhāva* or nature even in the state of incarnation, His incarnations being free from the touch of *prakrīti* or matter, His incarnations not being the result of *karma*, His incarnations having no fixed or appointed time of occurrence, His incarnations being the overflow of multitudes of qualities which are to serve the purposes of those who seek succour (from Him), His being pure and fit for contemplation in all states, His having Lakshmi as His companion in all states, His possession of divine ornaments, weapons, queen, abode, attendants, furniture, door-keepers, retinue, and the like (81), the power which He has of causing the separation of the gross body from the self, His being the resting place of the *jīvas* for repose, His dispensation of special favours to all *jīvas* at that time, His lighting up of the opening of the *Brahma Nādī* for the entrance of the self, His enabling the self to enter it, His being the cause of the emergence of the self out of the opening of the *Brahma nādī*, the appointment by Him of *Archis* and other escort for the self, His leading the self through the gateway of the sun, His being the cause of the self emerging out of the sphere (*anda*) of the material universe, His leading the self to the bank of the river Viraja, His being the cause of the separation of the subtle body from the self, His granting, to the self, of a transcendental (non-material) body, His being the cause of the self being welcomed and honoured by the divine *Apsarases*, His causing the self to enter the Brahmic fragrance and the like, His being the cause of the self being welcomed and honoured by the eternal *sūris* and the released souls (*muktas*), the regard shown by Him up to the time when the self

rises to the couch, His being the cause of the self enjoying perfect bliss, His being the principal goal of attainment, His being responsible for all kinds of service rendered with the body, without* the body and with more bodies than one, His possession of all objects of desire, His enjoyment of unsurpassed bliss, His being an object of unsurpassed enjoyment, His being an object of enjoyment in all forms, His being favourable, by His very nature, at all times, His bestowal to the self of bliss perfectly similar to His own, His inability to endure separation from those who seek succour from Him, and his being the cause of the self never returning to *samsāra*. (108).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:

(Thus) here in *Tirumantra*, the Lord is to be reflected upon by good men in a concise form (in the letter *a*) as the consort of Sri (Lakshmi) and as the Saviour: (in the dative or the fourth case whose affix has been dropped) as the *seshī*, and as destitute of equals and superiors; (in the word *namas*) as the *upāya* or means of attaining Him: (in the word Narayana) as the in-dwelling Self of all, (and in the fourth case of that word) as the object of attainment and as the Person to whom service is due.

### *THE QUALITIES OF THE JIVĀTMĀ*:

In the same way, when the *jīvatma* who is to attain the Supreme Being, which is the object of his attainment, reflects on himself with the help of the *Tirumantra*, he should note the following principal qualities of his own, which are indicated explicitly by the words themselves and which lie implicit in their meaning and other qualities connected with them, which are all accepted on the authority of the *pramāṇas*:—That he has to be redeemed by Bhagavan and Sri (Lakshmi), that he cannot be saved by any one else, that he has one who will protect him in all places, at all times, and in every manner, that he has a Saviour who has noble qualities, that he has one (Lakshmi) to recommend

(NOTE: * — Service without the body: Perhaps this should be taken to mean *anubhava* or experience).

him (to the Lord's mercy), that he is the servant of the Lord and (His consort) Lakshmi, that he is their eternal servant, that he is their unconditional seıvant, that he is not entitled to be the servant of anyone else, that, in his essential nature, the self is *jnāna* (knowledge), that it is bliss, that it is self-luminous, that the self shines to itself, that the self is denoted by the word 'I', that the self is atomic (*aṇu*), that it is subtle (*sūkshma*), that it cannot be cut (burnt and so on), that the self or soul is different from the twenty-four *tattvas* or reals, that (in its essential nature) the self is pure, that it is different from Iswara, that the self is a knower (having knowledge as its attribute), that the *jīva* has, by nature, the capacity to enjoy all things as agreeable, that he is competent to desire the supreme end of life, that he is fit to be commanded (by the Supreme Being), that he is fit to render service, that he has in him the power to have a direct perception of all things, that he is entitled to have unsurpassed bliss, that he is a doer who can act subject to the will of the Supreme Being, that he is a master (of certain things) under certain conditions or *upādhis*, that he is the *s'esha* of the devotees of the Lord, that he is their servant, that he is destitute of *upāyas* other than the Lord, that he is steeped in such things as *avidyā*, that his knowledge is capable of expansion with the help of (suitable) instruments (*karaṇa*) and the like, that he is beset by the fears due to *samsāra*, that he should look forward to the removal of *avidyā* and the like, that he is destitute of any means (of attaining the end), that he has such things as the good-will of Iswara, that he should seek and obtain a good *āchārya*, that he is competent to adopt *sadhyopāya* (*bhakti* or *prapatti*), that he should stand firm in the *upāya*, that he has great potency, that he may be called an object of creation, destruction and the like in virtue of his having the body as an attribute, but that the self is imperishable, that the self is one among many, that the selves are countless, that the self is pervaded by Iswara (who is its indwelling Self), that he is subject to the control of Iswara, that he is supported by Iswara, and that as a consequence of these, the self is the body of Iswara that the *Jīva* is the cause of the sportive delight

(*līlā rasa*) of Iswara, that he is entitled to be the instrument for the Lord's enjoyment (*bhoga*) (in *Nityavibhūti*), that his passage to his goal depends on Iswara, that the attainment of that goal depends on Iswara, that he should seek neither worldly prosperity nor *kaivalya*, that he should eagerly long for the attainment of Bhagavan, that he should become free from all *avidyā*, that the self would manifest itself in its essential nature, that the self is capable of visualising everything (in the state of *mukti*), that his sole enjoyment should consist in the experience of Bhagavan in every form, that he is capable of having unsurpassed bliss, that his being an enjoyer is (only) for the enjoyment of Bhagavan, that the self (in its realised state) can take any form and the like at will, that its will is irresistible, that the self will have perfect resemblance to the Lord except in regard to those uncommon qualities or attributes that define His essential nature, that the self's delight is in rendering every kind of service to Bhagavan and that the self will never return to *samsāra* (after attaining *mukti*). (67).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :—*

In the three words of this (*Tirumantra*), we should reflect, in brief, on our being entitled to be the *sesha* of no one other than the Lord, that we have no other *upāya* than the Lord, and that we have no other end to attain than the Lord.

Thus the *Tirumantra* has (as stated in *Nāradīyakalpam*) everything that a man ought to know. From it one can understand the essential nature of *cit* (sentient beings) *acit* (non-sentient matter) and Iswara, as well as the differences among the *jīvas* themselves. The *Tirumantra* also teaches the unconditional differences between the *jīva* (the individual self) and the Supreme Self, as the former is *sesha* and the latter *Seshī*. It determines also the person of the Supreme Deity who is both the material and the instrumental cause of the whole universe. Therefore even those who live in the same locality as those that meditate on the *Tirumantra* in this manner will never have delusions such as the following :— " There is no Iswara or God "; " Iswara is attri-

buteless"; "Iswara is absolutely indifferent (to the welfare of the *jīvas*), "His god-head is a mere reflection or image which has no reality" "His divinity is the result of some special *karma* performed by Him". "He is occasionally subject to such things as *karma*". "The three gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, are of equal rank". "The three gods mentioned above are really one:" The Supreme Reality or *Tattva* is someone beyond these three gods", "One of these, Brahma and Siva, is Iswara". "The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Iswara is subject to change or modification". "The material cause and the instrumental cause can never be the same", "The *jīva* and Iswara are only a single self". "The difference between the *jīva* and Iswara is due to certain limiting factors or conditions (*upādhi*)". "The *jīva* and Iswara are eternally (both) different and non-different." "The *jīva* is *s'esha* only on account of his *karma*". "The *jīva* is at times *s'esha* and at other times not a *s'esha*". "The *jīva* is inert (*Jada*)". "The *jīva* is, in his essential nature, knowledge (and does not possess knowledge as an attribute)". "The *jīva* is eternally free from bondage". "The *jīva* only seems to enjoy (*i. e.* his enjoyment is not real but illusory). "The *jīva* is not a doer or agent". "The *jīva* is a doer or agent independent of Iswara". "The self lasts (only) until the *pralaya*". "The *jīva* lasts only until *mukti* (and then becomes one with the Supreme Being)" There is only one *jīva* (all the others are illusory)". "The *jīva* stands self-supported". "The *jīva* is, in his essential nature, an effect having its origin in a cause." "The *jīva* can, in no sense, be considered as an effect (even with regard to His body and the like)", "The *jīva* can attain his end only by *karma*". "The *jīva*, in the state of release from *samsāra*, is like a stone (having no knowledge and the like)". "The *jīva* finds delight only in his own disembodied self". "The *jīva* is absolutely independent of Bhagavan". "The *jīva* is one with Iswara". "The *jīva* is without such things as activities". "The *jīva* can separate and unite (with Iswara)". "The *jīvas* vary in the bliss that they will enjoy after *mukti*". "The *jīvas* have such differences as being fit to have only *sālokya* and the like", and other such delusions

due to perverted systems of religious thought and to those who are outside the pale of Vedic religion.

So also weakness of faith in the Consort of Sri as a Protector, the search for other Redeemers, *the protest against being dependent on God, the delusion of being the unconditional *s'esha* to others, reverence to other deities, association with those who are their devotees, and, likewise, the delight in serving those who are unfit for service, such delusions as that the body and the soul are the same, such delusions as that the self is independent of Bhagavan, the earning (of money or other things) for one's own use, offence to the devotees of Bhagavan, forgetfulness of the fact that one is helpless and destitute of *upāyas*, a longing for the continuance of life in *samsāra*, the fear that the soul will suffer annihilation, the taste for doing what is improper, the classification of men into friends and foes, the seeking of other kinsmen (than Bhagavan), the desire for other ends (than the attainment of Bhagavan), averseness to the supreme goal of life and other such hindrances to one's firm stand in one's essential nature, in the real *upāya* and in the end in view — all these (delusions) will never approach them.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :—

The person who knows the essence of *Ashtākshara* will never be deluded by these and other ideas which are opposed to his system and his way of life. In no circumstances are the waters of the deep pool of the Ganga disturbed :

## *TEN WAYS OF CONSTRUING AND INTERPRETING TIRUMANTRA* :

We shall now consider in what manner the *Tirumantra* should be considered as forming a sentence or sentences and the meaning of such sentence or sentences:—

The *Tirumantra* is considered as being a single sentence, as being two sentences and as being three sentences, in different traditions. So also the meanings of the sentence or sentences are reflected upon in many ways :—

* See page (89).

*ONE SENTENCE—INDICATING UPĀYA.*

(1) When it is looked upon as a ***single sentence,*** the connection of words is to this effect :—" Adoration to Narayana whose nature is such as can be ascertained from the *praṇava* ( *aum* ), for it has been said :— " *Praṇava*[76] is the word that denotes Bhagavan." (It is true that) the *praṇava* itself is the name of Bhagavan, but there is no repetition or redundancy in another name being used, *viz*,, Narayana, for, as stated in *S'āndilya Smriti* and the like, the *aum* ( or *praṇava* ) is not of much avail, because its meaning by itself is not definite ". Therefore, in the *Vyāpaka mantras,* the other name is for the purpose of indicating the particular (deity). This way of construing the sentence, when considered in the light of the gross interpretation described in such places as the *Ahirbudhnya Samhitā* (see before) will make it (*Tirumantra*) appear as indicating the *upāya.* However the essential nature (of the *jīva*) and the supreme goal of life are also implicit in it (for, without a knowledge of them, no *upāya* can be adopted).

*ONE SENTENCE INDICATING KAINKARYA.*

(2) Considering such passages as " (They) fold[78] their hands together (in *anjali*) and with great delight utter the word *namas* ". the *mantra* is held also as indicating the activity of the *s'esha,* namely, service, which is included in the supreme experience of Bhagavan in *moksha.* This form of service must (necessarily) be preceded by a reflection on (one's) essential nature or " *svarūpa* " (*i. e.*) that of being a *s'esha* to the Lord. This can be made use of also by those who have adopted the *upāya* (*prapatti*), even in their present state, when they can realise the happiness (of that service to the Lord).

*TWO SENTENCES INDICATING SVARŪPA :—*

(3) When these two ideas become well-established, it is necesary to have a clear and distinctive knowledge of one's essential

76. Patanjali: Yogasutras: I-1-27 77. Sandilya Smriti: 5-71
78. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 344 - 45.

nature. For that purpose, the *Tirumantra* may be looked upon as being two sentences (a) *a Nārāyaṇāya um* — (b) *namas* (or *na mama*) meaning (a) "I am the unconditional *s'esha* of Bhagavan alone who is indicated by the letter *a* (in *aum*) and who has such attributes as being the universal Redeemer and the support of all and (I am the *s'esha*) of no other. (b) I do not belong to myself, neither am I the unconditional master of anything nor have I any (absolute or unconditioned) independence. If it be asked "Will there not be redundancy owing to the letter *a* and the word *Nārāyaṇa* being both the names of Bhagavan? The answer is (as follows):— In that case one of the two should be considered as an adjective to (the other) for the purpose of indicating the special qualities (such as protectorship) contained in its etymological interpretation. The redundancy would also cease if we construe the sentence into "(I am the *s'esha*) of Narayana who is denoted by the letter *a* in *(aum)*". Do we not see the word 'Bhagavan', which is His name, being employed in apposition or grammatical co-ordination *(sāmānādhikaraṇya)* with the word 'Vasudeva' (in the *Vāsudeva mantra*)? There is no redundance, as the word Narayana serves a purpose, being used for removing all doubts as to which deity is the ultimate universal cause denoted by the letter which is the origin of all letters (namely *a*). The order of words in a sentence is dependent on the ways in which they are recited (according to tradition); but the construction or syntactical connection of the words is in accordance with the meaning.

When thus taken as two sentences, the whole of the *Tirumantra* is descriptive of the essential nature *(svarūpa)* of the *jīva*. In the light of this construction, namely, that of describing the essential nature, the ancients used to say: "Be born in *Tirumantra*, grow up in *Dvaya* and stand firm in *Dvaya* alone". 'Birth' is due to 'the birth of a knowledge of one's essential nature' and the disappearance of the state which preceded it. This may be seen (from the verse): "Before[79] I had a knowledge of

79. Tirucchanda viruttam: 64

my essential nature, I was like one unborn. After attaining that knowledge, I was born and I do not forget this". That is acknowledging, of one's own accord, that one is the *s'esha* of no one other than Bhagavan, that one is not subject to the will of any one other than Bhagavan that, consequently, one has no other interests than being *s'esha* to Him and that one has no other saviour than He. 'Growth' means the adoption of the *upāya* resulting from a knowledge of a particular thing that has to be performed as being suited to one's competency. "To stand firm in *Dvaya* alone" means to become well-established in this *upāya* and in the (knowledge of the) fruit arising from it, without associating oneself with any other *upāya* and without any other end in view. Thus *Tirumantra* and *Dvaya* combined together reveal the *svarūpa*, the *upāya* and the end for which the *upāya* is adopted.

*TWO SENTENCES INDICATING THE UPĀYA:—*

(4) In this construction of *Tirumantra* into two sentences, some consider that the whole of *Tirumantra* has, for its purport, the surrender of the self with its accessories. In that case, the *m* in *praṇava* should be considered to be in the nominative or first case. By the principle of the offering of the *havis* (or oblation), *Tirumantra* would then mean "This unconditional offering, *namely*, the self or soul is surrendered to Narayana who is denoted by the letter *a* as His responsibility and who is the deity subject to no conditions or limiting factors (*upādhi*). In this unconditional sacrifice of the self, the word *namas* (*na mama*) would come to mean that one dissociates oneself from oneself and says, "The burden of my protection is not mine." As when (an offering is made) with the words: "This is for Indra and not mine", here also, the two sentences are essential; one to express the connection (of the offering) with the Supreme Being and the denial of its connection with oneself. Also in this surrender with the words *namas* (*na mama*), the purport may also extend to the denial of one's being an agent or doer absolutely independent of the Supreme Being. The two sentences may also be considered to

suggest the meaning; "The burden of my protection is of no other (than Bhagavan) nor is it my own".

That *Tirumantra* has, for its purport, the offering or surrender of the self was stated in the *Nitya* as follows :— "After offering[80] the self to the deity with the *moolamantra* etc" This idea is shown also in Sri *Vaikunta Gadya* as follows: "Praying that Bhagavan should accept one for eternal service to Himself alone, one should prostrate oneself and offer the soul to Bhagavan with the utterance of the sacred *moolamantra*".

*TWO SENTENCES INDICATING PURUSHĀRTHA:—*

(5) In each of the two sentences, some understand a word (like *syām*) meaning 'I pray that etc' or 'May I' etc. (In that case the first sentence would be *aum Nārāyaṇāya syām*, and the second *na mama syām*), and their meanings would be:—

"May I render service to Narayana denoted by the letter *a*! May there be no hindrances to this!" *Tirumantra*, as a whole, would then be a prayer for the attainment of what is desired and the removal of all undesirable things and this is considered the supreme end. In that case the reflection on one's *svarūpa* is implicit in it. Similarly even when the *Tirumantra* is considered to have, for its purport, only the indication of one's *svarūpa*, (as in the third meaning) it would, by suggestion or implication, indicate the specific end to be attained. The *upāya* and the prayer would then be known from the respective *pramāṇas* which ordain *prapatti*.

It is often said that *Tirumantra* has, for its purport, the knowledge of *svarūpa*, of *upāya* and of *purushārtha*, because a knowledge of these which did not exist before is acquired from it. The knowledge of these is *prāpya* (to be acquired) and the *Tirumantra* from which this knowledge arises may therefore be said to be *prāpyapara* (*i. e.*) to have, for its purport, the knowledge of these three. But the expression *prāpyapara* does not mean that

80. Sri Ramanuja: Nitya

*Tirumantra* has, for its denotation, this knowledge. It *denotes* the *svarūpa*, *upāya* and *purushārtha* and not the *knowledge* of these which afterwards arises from it. (For example: the word 'cow' denotes the animal called 'cow'; but when the word 'cow' is employed, we get also a knowledge of the cow. From this we should not say that the word 'cow' denotes the knowledge of the cow. It denotes only the cow though, subsequently, the knowledge also arises. To put it in other words, the denotation of the word and the items of knowledge which may arise when the word is employed are two different things. 'Cow' and 'knowledge of the cow' are two different things.

*THREE SENTENCES:—*

When *Tirumantra* is considered as consisting of three sentences (there are several ways of understanding the meaning:)— (6) & (7) The *svarūpa* or essential nature (of the *jīva*) and his supreme goal *(purushārtha)* are stated by the words themselves and the *upāya* is implicit in the meaning (though not expressed by the words); (8) or the *svarūpa* and the *upāya* are stated by the words themselves and the *purushārtha* is implicit in the meaning: (9) or the *upāya* and the *purushārtha* are stated by the words themselves and the *svarūpa* is implicit in the meaning (10) or the *svarūpa*, the *upāya* and the *purushārtha* (all the three) are stated (distinctly) by the words themselves.

(6) If it be asked how this is, the answer is as follows: The first two words indicate *svarūpa* and the third word *purushārtha*.

*a u m*

As stated in the following *śloka*: I am[81] the property *(śesha)*

*na mama*

of only Bhagavan who is denoted by the letter *a*; I do not exist for myself: He who is denoted by the word 'Narayana', which means the person whose abode or dwelling place is the multitude of the etermal *nārās (i. e.) jīvas* — To Him the varied forms of service which I should render in virtue of my nature should

81. Ashtasloki: 3.

appear (to me) in all places and in all states". (as stated in this *s'loka*), the *praṇava* and the *namas* clarify the *svarūpa;* and the third word *Nārāyaṇāya* with the predicate understood (namely *syām*) is a prayer for the attainment of the goal, in view of the idea of existing for Bhagavan expressed (already) by the *praṇava*. The form of the prayer would be "May I be for Narayana!" In this view, the prayer for the removal of hindrances (to *s'eshatva*) results from the meaning (and not from the words themselves, because the attainment of the *purushārtha* is impossible without the removal of hindrances). As stated in the *Dvaya* and in such passages as "Thou[81A] shalt enjoy thyself on the slopes of the hills in the company of Sita", since the one to whom service is due has a spouse, the meaning would here also be, "May I be for Narayana as well as for Lakshmi!". If the predicate be needed, a word like *bhaveyam* (May I be) should be understood. This prayer has indeed been made in such forms as the following:— "May I [82]render faultless service remaining with Bhagavan constantly in all places and in all states." "Vouchsafe [83]unto me Thy grace so that I may render service to Thee". "I pray [84]for eternal service to Thee" and "I should be [85]Thy eternal servant."

'Existing for His sake' is eternal; so there is no need to pray for it; this relationship of existing for His sake (as His *s'esha*) is already expressed by the *praṇava*. Therefore prayer is made here for service (to Bhagavan), which is the overflow of the full and perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan and which contains within itself all other ends of life as in the common saying: "In the ocean is a small puddle (*i. e.*) the larger contains the smaller within it)".

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS:—*

Here in the dative or fourth case (in the word *Nārāyaṇāya*), although the *jīva* expects his own gain (namely, the attainment of his *purushārtha*), yet it ends in the Master gaining pleasure or

81A. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda: 31 - 27.
82. Tiruvoymozhi: 3–3–1,
83. Peria Tirumozhi 1–9–2
84. Sri Ramanuja: Siria Gadya.
85. Sri Ramanuja: Siria gadya.

delight. ( Therefore there is no violation of the proper function of the *s'esha*). ( Likewise) desiring that the Master should gain conduces also to one's own bliss or *ānanda*.

" Whether it is said, " I beg for service which would please Thee " or " Thou shouldst find delight in having my service " — in either case, both are gainers ". ( This is the idea ). It has been said :— " Food [86]is of two kinds, that which has three qualities and that which has six qualities : That which has † three qualities is for those bound by *karma*; the other is for others ". Here the food with six qualities is the enjoyment of the (six) qualities of Bhagavan, and also the different kinds of service which result from them and which are most enjoyable.

(In the *Brahma Sūtras*) it is said that since the *s'rutis* indicate that there would be perfect resemblance or equality *(bhoga mātra sāmya) only* in regard to enjoyment between Brahman and the *mukta*, the perfect equality is *only* in enjoyment and in *jnāna* or knowledge. Therefore there is nothing (in the *s'rutis* or the *sūtras*) opposed to the *mukta* being a *s'esha* (to *Bhagavan*) which pertains to his essential nature *(svarūpa)* and, as a result thereof, rendering service (*kainkarya*) to Him. It has been explained in Sri *Bhashya* and elsewhere that when, in the state of aspiring to *mukti* and in the state of *mukti*, the *jīva* meditates on his being Brahman, what is meant is that this contemplation is only in virtue of the self or *jīva* being the body of Bhagavan. Therefore this notion of " I am Brahman " is indeed the result of the body ( here the self or *jīva)* being dependent on the inner self ( Bhagavan ) and existing only for the fulfilment of His purposes. ( Therefore there is no impropriety in the self being *s'esha* to Bhagavan even in the state of *mukti )*. The service that is rendered in the state of release or *mukti* comes from the very nature of the self ; it is free from the pairs of* opposites, constant and un-intermittent, and produces

86. Lakshmi tantram. 87. Brahma Sutras : 4-4-21.

† *That which has three qualities :* material objects of enjoyment having *sattvam, rajas* and *tamas*.

[*NOTE: *pairs of opposites* like pleasure and pain, heat and cold etc.]

unlimited delight. In the state of aspiration to *mukti (mumukshu)* the service that is rendered for its own sake is due to the circumstance or *upādhi* of some good *karma* done in the past; it has to endure the pairs of opposites (*dvandva*) such as heat and cold and pleasure and pain; it is interrupted by sleep and other such (hindrances) and the delight arising therefrom is limited.

Here all activities of the *jīva* which do not form the service of Bhagavan and which do not fit in with His commands will yield adverse results of some kind or other. Among those activities which are permitted by Bhagavan, those which are for the purpose of attaining *svarga*, cows and the like will yield fruits which may appear to be pleasant but which are mingled with many undesirable elements. Therefore they are, for that reason, hindrances. So, as stated in the *s'loka*: "One[87A] should give up the performance of those actions which are aimed at attaining the three ends, namely, *dharma*, wealth (*artha*) and pleasure (*kāma*)," the aspirant to *mukti* may perform those rites or actions in relation to Bhagavan which are the means of securing *bhakti* and *jnāna* and also of promoting the glory of Bhagavan and of Bhagavatas without caring for any other fruit. Since these rites or actions are not productive of life in *samsāra*, they would be included in the proper form of service. The state of being a *s'esha* to Bhagavan indicated in the *praṇava* extends to that of being a *s'esha* to His devotees in so far as laid down in the *pramānas*, as a consequence of the *jīva's* absolute subjection to and sole existence for Him, which are indicated appropriately by the word *namas.*

So the *kainkarya* or service to Bhagavan which is desired in the word *Nārāyaṇāya* extends to His devotees. This idea is expressed in such *s'lokas* as the following:— "I am[88] greatly pleased with those who have devotion towards my devotees. Therefore one should honour them greatly", and "Therefore[89] in order to obtain the grace of Bhagavan, one should please His

87 A. Vishnupurana.

88. Mahabharatha: Aswamedhika parva: 116 - 23.

89. Itihasa samucchayam: 27 - 27.

devotees. By this the Lord becomes heartily inclined to show His grace. There is no doubt of this ".

The saying that "dependence upon others is[89A] miserable" means (only) that the dependence on the worthless, which is due to past *karma* and which is not suited to one's *svarūpa*, is the cause of misery. Being subject to (the will of) Bhagavan and *tadīyas* is the prescribed goal suited to one who realises the essential nature of his self and it is therefore the cause of unsurpassed delight. "*Tadīyas*" or 'Bhagavatas' means those who feel a delight in being the servants of the Lord.

There are some who maintain that service to His devotees *(tadīyas)* logically follows when one desires to serve Narayana who has for His attribute *Nārās*, for service to the substantive in *Nārāṇām ayanam* includes (they say) service to *Nārāṇām* (all *nārās*) which is the adjective or attribute. (If the logic of this statement that what is prescribed for the substantive should be considered as prescribed also for its adjective or attribute, (in other words), if being the attribute is itself the cause (of being honoured and served). then every thing that is denoted by the word *Nārās* here, such as Brahma and the other gods, the enemies of Bhagavan, cattle and the like, would come under those to whom service should be desired. If it is said, "He desires to serve men's sovereign", it does not follow that he desires to serve *men* also who are the adjectives of the sovereign (in the phrase 'men's sovereign'). So also, by mere logic, the desire to serve *Nārās* will not become proved. (That will require *pramāṇas* for proof). Therefore only this much can be said :— By the authority of the *pramāṇas*, since the aspirant desires to do what is pleasing to the Master, he desires to serve those who are dear to Him and who realise that they are His *s'eshas* and have no other interests in life. Even in the experience of the state of *mukti*, the experience of everything else indicated by the word *Nāra* which is included in the experience or enjoyment of Bhagavan — even this is not understood from (the) logic (of the adjective and the substantive). It is understood from

89 A. Manusmriti : 4 - 160.

the authority of the *pramāṇa*, (namely the *s'ruti* which says "He sees all, and attains all things".

So far the *Tirumantra* was construed as having three sentences among which the first two were held as indicating the *svarūpa* of the *jīva* and the third as indicating the prayer for the attainment of the *purushārtha* or goal aimed at.

(7) Different from this is the construction of *Tirumantra* into three sentences of which the *praṇava* brings out the *svarūpa* or essential nature, *namas* forms the prayer for the removal of hindrances or evils, and the *purushārtha* which will result from that renewal is indicated in *Nārāyaṇāya syām* ("May I be for Narayana!") That the *namas* in *Tirumantra* too, like the *namas* in *Dvaya* has, as its purport, the prayer for the removal of hindrances — this interpretation, too, is explained in Bhattar's *Nitya* in the *s'lokas*: "As stated in the *praṇava*, I am the *s'esha* of Bhagavan; in spite of it, I was subdued by the notions of 'I' and 'Mine' owing to (my) past *karma*. The word *namas* states that, hereafter, I should remember my being *s'esha* to Bhagavan and render service to Him". Therefore the syntactical construction becomes (in this interpretation): *Aham na mama syām* "I shall not be my own *s'esha* or *na mama kinchit syāt*" "May I have no hindrances!" *Syām* or *Syāt* being understood. So it amounts to a prayer for the complete removal of all hindrances such as *avidyā* or ignorance, *karma*, the impressions left by them *(vāsanas)*, the taste or inclination *(ruchi)* and the association with *prakriti* or matter This has been shown in the passage in *Vedārthasangraha*, where it is said :— "Owing to beginningless *avidyā* or ignorance, two kinds of karma, good and evil (*puṇya* and *pāpa*) have been flowing like a stream. On account of this, the *jīva* becomes enclosed in bodies of four kinds: Brahma and the other gods, men, animals and plants. So in accordance with the notion entertained by the *jīva* regarding his nature, the stream of *samsāra* increases in its volume. In order to get rid of the fear caused by it which is hard to resist etc." So also it is said,

" In order[89A] to protect the souls of *samsārins* whose nature is such that they have false notions of ' I ' about the body, bad ways of life due to these (false notions) and the impure body which results therefrom, the Lord of the Nityasuris was born into all sorts of castes and species ".

It may be asked :—" When a prayer has been made for the removal of hindrances, where is the need for another prayer for the attainment of the desired end? Will it not follow as a natural consequence? Has it not been said: " When the *jīva* attains[90] Brahman, those qualities or attributes of his which are natural to him and which were, till now, hidden begin to shine forth. This is revealed by the word *S'vena* in the *s'ruti* ". " In the same[91] way as the brightness or radiance of a gem is not produced (anew) but is a natural consequence of washing away the dirt (covering it), so also *jnana* or knowledge is not produced in the soul (anew). When a tank or a well is dug, the water and the ether (space) are not created but simply come into prominence (having already been there) It is only what already exists that is manifested clearly. How can there be the production of a thing which did not exist? So also on the removal of undesirable or evil qualities, qualities like knowledge begin to shine forth. They are not created anew, for these qualities are eternal in the *jīva* (since they belong to his essential nature) "?

The answer to this question may be expressed as follows :—

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

" The son begs of his father for his share of the property, though it is lawfully his. In the same way the servant (the *jīva*) who has offended ( the Master) begs of the Supreme Being that he should be permitted to render service ". There is nothing inappropriate in the jiva who has lost what he is entitled to, praying thus :— " May I have what is my share! Be Thou so gracious as to pardon my offence ;"

89 A. Tiruviruttam.

90. Brahma Sutras: 4 - 4 - 1.

91. Vishnu Dharma: 104 - (55 - 57).

From the passages quoted above, it would appear also that just as when the hindrance is removed the radiance natural to the gem begins to shine by the will of God, as stated in. "All things[91A] exist as such only by Thy will", so also such things as the expansion of *jnāna*, which naturally belong to the *Jiva*, are manifested as a result of the Lord's will, which is of the form of the compassion natural to Him.

But it may be asked :— "In a (*)system of thought which holds that the non-existence (of a thing) means the presence of some other thing, the removal of hindrances should, by itself, be the attainment of what is desired. Hence will not the separate prayer for it be redundant? Besides has not the author of *S'rī Bhāshya* declared: "The disappearance of *avidyā* (literally, ignorance; *karma*) is itself *moksha*"?

[NOTE (*): Visishtadvaitins hold that the non-existence (of a thing) is simply the existence of some other thing and not a category apart. For example, when we say, 'There is no pot on the floor', the non-existence of the pot is merely the existence of the floor. *Tarkikas* hold, on the other hand, that non-existence or the absence of a thing *(abhava)* should be considered as a separate category ].

To that question the answer is as follows :— For the sake of some purpose, a single thing may be indicated (in two ways), in its essential nature *(svarūpa)* and also in a form that is opposed to it So (here), it is called the attainment of what is desired and the disappearance of what is not desired, because of the intention to signify a special purpose. In the state of *samsāra*, the disappearance of something that is undesirable may be another undesirable thing or the disappearance of what is desired and what is not desirable alike. But in the state of *moksha*, since every thing (without exception) that is undesirable disappears, what remains is *all* agreeable So the two (the disappearance of the undesirable and the attainment of what is desired) were stated separately in order to show, with great regard, that the former state (*samsāra*) is most undesirable and the latter most desirable, since it

91A. Sri Vaikuntasatvam: 36.

(is free from all undesirable elements and) has only what is desirable. Further the two have to be stated separately, since the withdrawal of punishment by Bhagavan and such things as the expansion of the *jīva's* knowledge are different things. It is not improper to pray separately for these two things since the remission of punishment by God which is the cause of the contraction of knowledge and the like is different from such things as the expansion of knowledge, service and the like which results from the disappearance of the contraction of knowledge, service and the like, which were the results of that punishment?

There is also another reason for two separate prayers :— In some other systems of thought (like that of the *Tārkikas*), *moksha* means the disappearance of all undesirable things and the attainment of a state similar to that of a stone (with no positive content in the form of enjoyment or bliss). In order to show that *moksha* in our system is not of that kind, but has a positive content of enjoyment or bliss, the two are stated as being separate and also to show that in the attainment of Bhagavan (in *mukti*), there is no such thing as an alloy of misery or pain just as there is in attaining such states as the position of Indra."

Thus if it is held that the *svarūpa* and the prayer are expressed explicitly by the words themselves, the *upāya* prescribed by the *s'āstras*, for the attainment of the end in view (*purushārtha*) namely, the *sādhyopāya*, is implicit in the meaning of *namas* which states the disappearance of undesirable things in the case of the man destitute of all other *upāyas* as a result of *bharanyāsa*.

(8) *SVARŪPA AND UPĀYA* :—

Since the prayer for the *purushārtha* is not a mere desire but the soliciting of a protector, the *anga* and other accessories may be considered also as implicit and not expressed. The *Tirumantra* would then mainly indicate the *svarūpa* and *upāya*. If we split Narayana into *nārāṇām ayanam yena* "He by whom He becomse

the resting place of *nārās* (the world of *jīvas*), the word *ayana* may be considered also as indicating the *upāya*, for He is the *upāya*.

(9) *UPĀYA AND PURUSHARTHA* :—

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

Some *āchāryas* considered that, as in the order in which these are expressed in *Dvaya* and in the *charama s'loka*, here, in *Tirumantra* also, the *praṇava* (*tāram*) expresses *bharanyāsa* or the surrender of the responsibility of protection and that the other two words *namas* and *Nārāyaṇāya* express the attainment of the end in view.

(10) *THREE SENTENCES INDICATING RESPECTIVELY SVARŪPA UPĀYA AND PURUSHĀRTHA*:—

*Tirumantra* may be considered also as stating all the three, viz., *svarūpa*, *upāya* and *purushārtha* in that order. In this case the *praṇava* states the *svarūpa* or essential nature of the *jīva* (as Bhagavan's *s'esha*), the *namas* states the *upāya* and what remains (*i e.*) *Nārāyaṇāya* states the prayer for the *purushārtha* or the attainment of the end in view.

The details concerning these three should be understood by a study of the *Vedanta s'āstras*. The construction or interpretation given above of *Tirumantra* has resemblances to the order in which the *tattva*, the *upāya* and the *purushārtha* are explained in the *Vedantha s'āstras*. Does not that *sastra* proceed in this way? In the first two chapters (*adhyāyas*) (of the *Brahma sūtras*), the Supreme Real (Brahman) and the reals subordinate to it are determined. In the third chapter, competency (*adhikāra*) and accessories (*angas*) are stated along with the *upāya* and in the fourth chapter, the fruit or the attainment of the goal is explained by way of conclusion. The essential nature of the Supreme Real and that of the lower reals explained in the first two chapters (*adhyāyas*) and the fruit or goal of attainment explained in the fourth are the same for the man who has adopted *prapatti* as a

direct and independent means or *upāya*. The shortcomings and sufferings in *samsara* which are dealt with in the sections *(pāda)* on *Vairāgya* and *Ubhayalinga* in the third chapter and the Redeemer's being opposed to all that is of the nature of blemish *(heya)* and His being the sole possessor of all auspicious qualities — these, too, must necessarily be understood by the *prapanna* who is an aspirant to *mukti*. The different forms of meditation or worship *(upāsana)* of Brahman, which are treated of in the third section *(pāda)* of the third chapter (of the *Brahma sūtras*), should be adopted by those who are competent for them *(i. e.)* those who have adopted *bhakti*. The man who is not competent for them and who is destitute of other *upāyas* should realise that these forms of meditation are too high for him and adopt *nyāsa* as his *upāya*. For, as stated in the following sub-sections :- *Nānā s'abdādi bhedāt* (*Brahma sutras* 3—3—56) (The forms of meditation or worship or *vidyās* concerning Brahman) are different from one another, for their names are different and *vikalpah avis'ishta phalatvāt* (3—3—57). (Any one of them may be adopted as there is no difference in the resulting fruit). *Nyāsa* is different from the other *vidyās* and in yielding the fruit conferred by them, does not require any other aid. The man who has adopted *upāsana* (or *bhakti*) should perform the rights and duties pertaining to his *varṇa* (caste) and *ās'rama* (stage of life) as an accessory or *anga* to the *vidyā* or form of meditation as stated in *Brahma Sūtras* (3 - 4 - 33) " The man who practises *bhakti* should perform the duties of his *varṇa* and *ās'rama* as an *anga* to *bhakti*." The man who has adopted *prapatti* as a direct and independent *upāya* should perform these rites and duties as having been enjoined by Bhagavan and for their own sake (without expecting any gain or reward), for it is said in the *Brahma Sūtras* (3 - 4 - 32). " Since they are enjoined, *yajnas* and other rites become the duties of the (respective) *ās'ramas* ". If this is understood the, *svarūpa*, *upāya* and *purushārtha* which are explained in the *S'ārīraka S'āstras* (*Brahma sūtras*) are all to be found within the sacred *Ashtākshara*. We have already explained how the five truths that ought to be understood may be found in this. (Chap. 4).

## *SUMMARY OF THE TEN INTERPRETATIONS OF TIRUMANTRA GIVEN ABOVE:—*

Thus the *āchāryas* consider *Tirumantra*, which has innumerable meanings within it, as having ten (different) meanings in accordance with their respective tradition:— When the *Tirumantra* is considered as a single sentence, it is thought of as indicating (1) the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of the *jīva* and (2) his activity as a *s'esha*. When considered as two sentences, it is thought of as indicating (1) the essential nature of the self and (2) the surrender (of the self) by a positive and a negative statement, namely, (The burden of protecting me is Bhagavan's : it is not mine) and so also (3) as indicating a prayer for the *purushārtha*. When it is considered as three sentences, it is thought of in the following ways:— (1) The first two words indicate the *svarūpa* and the third word indicates the prayer: (2) The *praṇava* indicates the essential nature or *svarūpa*, and the other two words indicate the prayer for the removal of undesirable elements and for the attainment of the desired end. (3) In the same manner, the first word indicates the *svarūpa* and the other two indicate the *upāya*, (4) the first word indicates the surrender (of the self) and the other two indicate the prayer for the attainment of the fruit (desired), (5) The three words indicate respectively the *tattva*, the *upāya* and the *purushārtha*.

When some of these meanings are considered as the main interpretations, the others, too, should be looked upon as being implicit in the meaning, though not expressed explicitly by the words themselves.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

Therefore by the interpretations of the words and the sentences thus taught (to us) by the *āchāryas*, who have realised the truth, other interpretations stated by those who are outside the pale of Vedic religion and by heretics (within that fold) have been rejected.

The man who has attained a clear and sure knowledge of *Tirumantra* which cannot be shaken by those outside the pale of Vedic religion and by heretics — that man has been described as follows in the *s'loka* :— " He has [92]mounted the (top most) storey of the palace of the knowledge of *Tirumantra* and has obtained freedom from all anxiety (about himself). The wise man looks down (from there) at ignorant people suffering for lack of this knowledge, like a man on the top of a mountain looking at people standing below (it)". The knowledge referred to in the following *s'loka* :— "Food, [93]sleep, ear and sex are common both to animals and to men. The superiority of men to animals consists in their possession of knowledge. Those who are without knowledge are like animals"-the knowledge referred to here is this clear and sure knowledge. (The man who has this knowledge) will never be moved or troubled by praise or censure as stated in the *s'loka* :— " Here he[94] is called a wise man (*pandita*) who like the (unsullied) waters in the depths of the Ganga will never feel elated by praise or pained by censure ". " In the land[95] where the man who has a true knowledge of *Tirumantra* and who stands firmly in its meditation, is honoured, there will be no disease, no famine and no fear of robbers ". As stated in this sloka : No such evil will occur there. It has been stated by those who are proficient in Ayurveda : " Adoration[96] to that unique physician who killed, without exception, all diseases like *rāga* (desire) which are chronic, which lie spread over all parts of the body and which cause feverish activity, ignorance, dissatisfaction (with everything) ". The *s'loka* quoted above really means, in accordance with the above statement in *Vāgbhatam*, that (in the land where a knowledge of *Tirumantra* is honoured) there will be no such principal diseases as *rāga* or desire, no contraction of knowledge, for knowledge has been described as wealth or Sri and no such great robbers as those who steal the self which cannot be

92. Mahabharata santi parva 150–11
93. Narasimhapuranam 16–13
94. Mahabharata : Udyogaparva 33–33
95. Naradiyam : 1 . 20.
96. Vagbhatam.

stolen by external robbers. (The person who considers the self which truly belongs to Bhagavan as his own is a robber).

### *OTHER VYĀPAKA MANTRAS :—*

The ideas contained in the other *Vyāpaka mantras* which contain the words (Vishnu and Vasudeva), namely *Namo Vishnavē* preceded by *praṇava* and *namo Bhagavate Vāsudevāya* preceded by *praṇava* are just those which have been declared as existing in *Tirumantra*. As interpreted by *Ahirbudhnya* such qualities[97] as pervasiveness, splendour, entrance (into all) or immanence and will, which are deduced from the respective verbal roots are additional qualities in the Supreme Being, Vishnu and decisive of His being the Supreme Deity ". The meanings of the word "Vishnu" as derived from the root *Vish* which means "to pervade, '*vas*' which means to 'shine', *vis'* ' which means 'to enter' and *ish* which means 'to will' and so also the meanings of the *Vāsudeva* derived from *vasati*, *vāsayati*, which mean respectively, "He dwells within all" and 'He makes all dwell within Himself" and *Dīvyati* which means 'shines', from which follow His being the support of all, His being free from any taint due to contact with them, His sportive activity, and His will to conquer — all these meanings are contained in parts of the word "Narayana".

As stated in the *s'loka* : "Whatever[98] a man ought to know is all contained in *Ashtākshara*, that is, the Vedas *viz.*, *Rik*, *Yajus*, *Saman* and so also *Atharvan* and other collections of words," as stated therein, this *Ashtākshara* is, by itself, the revelation of all that is desired by the aspirant to *mukli*, in relation to the *tattva* (Truth) and *hita* (the means or *upaya* for reaching the goal). A single utterence of it is equal to frequent repetitions of all the vedas, for it has been said, "Whatever[99] fruit is gained by those who repeat the Rik, Yajus and Sama Vedas many times — that fruit is gained by the man who utters the *Ashtākshara mantra*

97. Ahirbudhnya Samhita : 52 - 38.
98. Haritasmriti : 3 - 65.
99. Naradiyam 1-10

only once. A single utterance of this *mantra* is equal to a repetition of all the Vedas. Though, as stated in the *s'loka*: "In [100]proportion to the faith that a man has in the *Moolamantra* does he attain the ends he desires, it is impossible to estimate adequately its greatness" — (though, as stated in the *s'loka*), there are degrees of success varying in accordance with the degrees of faith, the potency (of the *mantra*) is boundless (incapable of being measured) in the case of those who have great and intense faith (*mahā vis'vāsa*) in it. Since in that *s'loka* (100) it is not specifically stated by whom it is impossible to measure its potency, it may be inferred that even Narayana who propagated this *mantra*, who is the subject of this *mantra* and who is, by nature, omniscient and who incarnated as Nara and Narayana and propagated (by precept and practice) the Scripture without letting it become extinct—that even Narayana knows that its potency is not capable of being measured. Tirumangai Alvar who was initiated into this *mantra* and its meaning by the seer of this *mantra* (Bhagavan), who is also its deity, has declared as follows :— "If thou shouldst, with the help of the *mantra* of eight letters, always enjoy Bhagavan, who appears at the end of the Vedas which form the wealth of Brahmins, thou shalt be happy."

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

Those wise men with eight qualities who meditate on the *mantra* of eight letters which treats of Bhagavan who is possessed of eight qualities and who created the eight-bodied (Rudra), the eight-eyed (Brahma), the eight quarters and their eight guardians, the eight *prakritis*, and the eight great mountains—these wise men have, within their (easy) reach, the eight great flowers, the eight *siddhis* or super-natural powers, the eight kinds of *bhakti* or devotion, the eight *angas* or accessories of *yoga*, the eight kinds of wealth, the eight great qualities, the eight times eight arts or *kalās* and the *rasa* or emotional state or sentiment which is beyond the eight *rasas*, namely, the emotional state called *s'ānti* or serenity of spirit.

100. Naradiya Kalpam 1 - 14.

*EXPLANATION OF TAMIL VERSE :—*

To those great and wise men who meditate on the sacred *Ashtākshara*, which treats of the Supreme Ruler, who is the (ultimate) cause of all and who is opposed to everything of the nature of blemish and is, at the same time, the abode of all auspicious qualities—(to these great men) whatever is desired by them among the spiritual virtues, the eight forms of wealth and the like is never beyond their reach. The 'eight-bodied' means Rudra who obtained the boon of having eight bodies, namely, the five elements (*bhutas*—earth, water, fire, air and ether or space), the moon and the sun and the man who performs a *yajna* or sacrifice: the eight-eyed refers to Brahma who has eight eyes because of his four faces; the eight quarters; the eight guardians of the eight quarters such as Indra, the eight *prakritis* are the eight *tattvas* or reals like *avyakta*, *mahat* and *ahaṅkāra*, the eight great mountains means the eight* chief mountain ranges; 'who created these' means the Supreme Being possessed of eight qualities who created all these; His eight qualities are being (1) without subjection to *karma*, (2) without old age, or (3) death, or (4) grief, (5) or hunger or, (6) thirst, (7) the possession of eternal objects of enjoyment and (8) omnipotence or the ability to accomplish whatever He desires; 'to those wise men possessed of wisdom with its eight *angas* who meditate on the *mantra*' means 'to those enlightened men who are possessed of understanding with its eight *angas* and who meditate on the sacred *Ashtākshara* which is the chief *mantra* among those that treat of Bhagavan.' The eight *angas* of wisdom are "quickness of grasp, retention of what is learnt, remembrance, the ability to explain, inference, modification of what has been stated (to adapt it to new situations), reason, the knowledge of Truth — these are the eight qualities of understanding". The eight great flowers are the following :— "Non-violence *(ahimsā)* is the first flower, control of the senses is (another) flower : then comes the flower called compassion to all creatures, then the flower of

*NOTE: They are Himavan, Vishada, Vindhya, Malyavan, Pariyatraka, Mandara, Malaya and Meru.

forgiveness in special, then the flower of knowledge, the flower of *tapas* and so also the flower of contemplation *(dhyāna)* and the flower of truth — these eight kinds of flowers are most pleasing to Vishnu. The eight *siddhis* are [101]inference, the knowledge of words, learning Vedanta, freedom from the three kinds of suffering: that in the body brought about by animals, and that due to the (anger of the) gods, like storm and lightning, the possession of friends and charity. The eight forms of devotion are the following:— Love[102] to God's devotees without an eye to their faults, delight in the worship offered to Him by others an eagerness to listen to stories concerning Bhagavan, changes in the voice and the body and tears in the eyes while listening to them, efforts to worship Bhagavan, freedom from hypocrisy in one's relations towards God, constant meditation on God, and freedom from the expectation of rewards from God. The eight *angas* of *yoga* are *yama*, *niyama* and the rest (*āsana*, *prāṇāyāma*, *pratyāhara*, *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇa* and *samādhi*); the eight forms of wealth are:— the power to contract one's body to a much smaller size, the power to make one's body assume larger dimensions, the power to make oneself light (of weight), the power to make oneself heavy, perfect control over oneself, control over others, the attainment of whatever is desired, and success by merely desiring it. The eight great qualities are those which manifest themselves after *mukti* or those stated in the *s'loka* "Eight qualities enable a man to shine (above others): They ere:— right[103] knowledge, good birth, control of the senses, learning the meaning of the *Veda* from the *āchārya*, the skill to win over one's rivals, freedom from talkativeness. charity in proportion to one's wealth and gratitude." Eight times eight *kalās* are the sixty four arts and crafts. The eight *rasas* are[104] *s'ringāra* (love) *vīra* (heroism) *karuṇa* (pathos); *adbhuta* (wonder); *hāsya* (humour); *bhayānka*, (terror or fear) *bībhatsa* (the grotesque or gruesome) and *raudra* (anger).

101. Sankya Karika.
102. Garudapurana : 219 - 6 - 9
103. Mahabharata - Udyogaparva : 33 - 106
104. Amara

The ninth is *s'anti*. Among these, there is nothing which he cannot have at his desire. The imperfect development of spiritual qualities results from want of earnestness in meditation. The inability to attain the eight forms of wealth is due to neglect The delay in the release from *samsāra* is due to weakness in the desire for it. That is why it has been declared "The *mantra* -[105] *namo nārāyaṇa* - secures whatever is desired."

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :

Thus (we have shown here what was taught by (*āchāryās*) who were free from the demon of ignorance (*avidyā*), who never ignored the path of the righteous and who shrank in shame from the enjoyment of petty pleasures.

*TAMIL VERSE* .—

We have been initiated into the excellent *mantra*, which enables us to give up all association as *s'eshas* with those who are other than our great Redeemer, and to realise that we are souls (and not mere bodies) (*praṇava*) We have awakened from (our) ignorance and being without any other refuge, (we) have sought the feet of Narayana who created (all the worlds) (*namas*). As the result of our initiation into this *mantra*, we (now) seek to perform that service which the ancient devotees (the eternal *sūris* render with eagerness (*Nārāyaṇāya*).

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :—

This *mantra* which is thus constituted of three words that are composed, respectively, of one, two and five letters and which treats of the three things to be known, namely, *tattva* (the truth), *hita* (the *upāya* and *purushārtha* (the end to be attained) that are of the very essence of Vedanta—this *mantra* which is the foremost of all *mantras*, which has the *praṇava* of three letters which is the

105. Naradiyam 1 - 41

origin of the *Vedas*, which has the word having the three meanings, *sthūla* (gross) *sūkshma*, (subtle) and *para* the (supreme) (namely, *namas*) and which has in it the word (Narayana) that forms the essence of the Upanishads—this *mantra* confers, on those who seek no other reward. freedom from *prakriti* with its three qualities (*i. e.* from *samsāra*.)

## (28) THE CHAPTER ON THE *DVAYA*

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:—*

This *mantra (Dvaya)* which is used for performing *s'araṇāgati* to the Lord of Padma (Lakshmi) is of the nature of the dawn coming after the dark night of *samsāra*; for having caused it to be heard by Bhagavan, a man is in the position of one who has done his duty; having repeated it frequently, he is in the position of one who has attained his goal.

The particular *upāya (viz. prapatti)* which was stated as being indicated directly and explicitly by the middle word of *Tirumantra (namo)* or by implication in its meaning and the goal of attainment *(purushārtha) viz.* service to the Lord which is indicated in the third word *(Nārāyaṇāya)* are shown clearly and distinctly in *Dvaya.* This mantra is revealed in *Kaṭṭavallī* separately, in two parts (with other passages coming in between) and is enjoined as fit to be meditated on with the two parts together It is also explained in such treatises as *S'rī Pras'na Samhitā* in *Pāncharātra* with details about the number of syllables in it (the number of letters, sentences, their order etc). Therefore it is a *tāntrika mantra* based on the *s'ruti.* The statement of some that it is a sentence given by ancient *āchāryas* means only this much:— that it should be held in great esteem because it was taught by the ancient *āchāryas* or that Bhagavan who is the Supreme *Āchārya* enjoined it in the *Bhagavat S'āstra, (Pāncharātra).* Those who desire to know may find its *rishi* (its *beejam* etc.) as for the *Moolamantra* and the like in accordance with such treatises as the *Mantras'astra* and the Science of Grammar *(vyākaraṇa).*

### *THE REASON FOR ITS BEING CALLED DVAYA:*

This *mantra* is called *Dvaya* (the Two) because it treats of two points, the *upāya* and the *upeya* (the means and the goal of attainment) which are implicit in two *s'lokas* (of the *Ramāyaṇa*), namely, "He ([1]Lakshmana) fell at the two feet of his brother

1. Ramayana: Ayodya kanda: 31-2

and said in the presence of Sita, "Thou[2] shalt enjoy thyself with Sita on the slopes of the mountains. Whether thou art awake or asleep, I (Lakshmana) will render every form of service to Thee" The man who is not for any other *upāya* or for any other end or object (in view) has full competence for the adoption of this *mantra.*

Some (*āchāryas*) say that this *mantra* is called *Dvaya* (The Two), because it indicates (1) the soliciting (*vāraṇa*) of a Saviour and (2) the surrender of the responsibility (*bharasamarpaṇam*), both in one The same is the reason for the word *Dvaya* being employed in respeet of such other *mantras* as "Sriman Narayana Swamin". To this *mantra* also, such things as the adoration of the *guru* which are prescribed in the following *slokas* in regard to another *mantra* concerning *prapatti* are applicable: "After prostrating[3] before the *guru*, this sacred *mantra* (literally: the king of *mantras*) should be learnt. The *guru* is, himself, the supreme Brahman; the *guru* is himself the great *upāya*; the *guru* is himself the great *vidyā* or form of meditation; the *guru* is himself the sacred *siddhopāya*, the *guru* is himself *moksha*, the *guru* is himself the great wealth of *jnāna* or knowledge and *bhakti* because he initiates (one) into the *mantra*, the *guru* is most venerable. This *mantra* does not require any suitability or any auspicious position of the stars for its initiation nor any purity attainable from baths in holy waters. Nor does it require for its successful initiation any *japam*, *homam*, daily repetition and the like. First one should prostrate in full before the *guru* three times and touch his feet with one's head and receive the *mantra* like a poor man expecting a hidden treasure. Having thus received the *mantra*, one should seek refuge under me. By this *mantra* alone should one surrender one's self to me. He who has done so becomes one who has done what one ought to do".

2. Ramayana: Ayodhya kanda: 31-27

3. Satyaki Tantram:

It is learnt from the *S'astras* (*Katavallī* and the like) that a single utterance of this *mantra* by a believer preceded by a knowledge of its meaning as a whole will secure salvation. The potency of this *mantra* as distinguished from that of other *mantras* has been described as follows (by Sri Ramanuja):— "*In whatever manner* you utter the *Dvaya etc.*" It has been said:— "The man by whom the name of Bhagavan is uttered even unconsciously is freed from all sins as a forest with a lion in it from animals that are afraid of lions", and (so also), ' The extent[6] of potency that Thy name, O Hari, has in condoning sins exceeds even that of sins that can (ever) be committed by a man who eats dog's flesh (*i. e.* a *chandāla*)". If, in such passages, the potency of a mere utterance of the Lord's name is praised in very high terms, what is said in such treatises as the *s'ruti* about even a single utterance of this great *mantra* which reveals, in full, the Redeemer, the surrender of the self to Him and the fruit to be obtained therefrom can be easily realised by the force of *pramāṇas*. The reason of this potency may be understood from the *pramāṇas* and from tradition or *sampradāya*. It is not proper to argue about these subjects which are of the nature of mystic doctrines. We can only place faith in them on the strength of what is stated in the *s'astras*. In such treatises as the *Mahābhārata*, it is said:— "Arguments[7] based on reason are of no avail in regard to divine and other mysteries. The man who desires his happiness should have implicit faith in them like one who is deaf and who is blind."

The self-surrender which is the purport of this *mantra* has been praised in such *s'lokas* as the following and in other contexts:- " A man should[8] surrender to Brahman his true and natural self free from all limiting conditions like *avidyā*. This is *bhaktiyoga* and the *karmayoga* which is necessary for it. Other things are vain talk." Instead of 'Other things are vain talk" there is

4. Sri Ramanuja: Saranagati Gadya.
5. Vishnupuranam: 6 - 8 - 19.
6
7. Mahabharata: Anusanikaparva: 228 - 60.
8. Daksha Smriti.

another reading of the *s'loka* which would mean "This is (real) knowledge and what is to be acquired with the help of knowledge." Though this *s'loka* has, for its purport, the surrender of the self, the surrender of the responsibility or burden of protection which is described here is contained within it. Other *mantras* which are mentioned in such treatises as *Vyāsasmriti* and in *S'vetās'vatara upanishad* like, "A [9]man should remember that he is the body of the spotless and resplendent Vishnu and with an eager longing for Him, who is the object of attainment, and without any desire for other ends, (he) should surrender his self to Vishnu uttering the *mantra* "*Tad Vishnoh*" — none of those other *mantras* reveals the Redeemer, the act of seeking His protection and the fruit arising from it so clearly (as this *Dvaya*) Even in the *Tiru-mantra* these three are stated (only) with extreme conciseness. Therefore this *Dvaya* which reveals, in full, the object of attainment and the means of attainment is the most important of all *mantras* dealing with *prapatti*.

## *THE MEANING OF THIS MANTRA*

*The s'araṇāgati gadya is a commentary on Dvaya*:—

(Sri Ramanuja) has in his *gādya* (prose treatise) given the meaning of this *mantra* as known from *s'ruti*, *smriti*, *Itihāsas Purāṇas*, *Bhagavat S'āstra* and the like and in accordance with the traditional order of interpretation of great *āchāryas*:— It is as follows:—The purport of the word *S'rīmat* (in *Dvaya*) is explained in these words (in the *gadya*);— " (Lakshmi) whose essential nature *(svarūpa)* and whose form *rūpa* are such as can be held in esteem by Bhagavan and as are in conformity with (the nature of) Bhagavan Narayana ". In the words beginning with "opposed to everything of the nature of blemish" (in the *gadya*), (Sri Ramanuja) has described at length Bhagavan's essential nature *(svarūpa)*, His form (*rūpa*), and His attributes and glories (*vibhūtis*). So the meaning of the word Narayana has been commented upon (in

9. Vyasa Smriti.

them.) In the commentary on the word 'Narayana', Lakshmi who has been already stated in *S'rīmat* is once again made to appear in the midst of His glories (*vibhūtis*) in the word *S'rī-vallabha* in the *gadya* in order to explain her role as mediator (between the *jīva* and her Spouse). Then Sri Ramanuja takes for comment the words *S'rīman Nārāyaṇa* employed in the sentences treating of the goal and the means of attaining it. The person competent for *prapatti* indicated by the first person singular in the word *prapadye* (I seek Him for *refuge*) is explained in the words (in the *gadya*) which mean "I seek the refuge of Thy two lotus feet" explain the words *charanau* (feet) and *s'araṇam* (refuge) and so also the verb (in *Dvaya*). Later Sri Ramanuja indicates distinctly the word *Dvaya* which is commented upon.

It may be asked:— "Why should (he) dwell at such length without specifying the word *Dvaya* either in the beginning or at the end, but only here?" The answer is as follows:— Here in regard to the *upāya* and the *upeya* or what is to be attained thereby, the most important is Narayana with Sri (Lakshmi). Therefore the word Narayana with its attribute *S'rī* which occurs in two places (in *Dvaya*) has been already commented upon. So in order to show that along with the *sādhyopāya* (namely *prapatti*)) which is indicated by this *mantra*, the principal *upāya* and the principal object of attainment have been commented upon, the word *Dvaya* is here inserted (*i. e.*) to mean that the *Dvaya* has been, for the most part, explained. Then in the *s'lokas* which begin with '*pitaram-mātaram*" and in certain sentences taken form *Jitantā*, and *Bhagavad Gītā* and other passages which express the same idea, Sri Ramanuja shows that the resulting meaning of the *Dvaya* is the adoption of the *upāya* (*prapatti*) without any other object and with no other *upāya* in one's view or power, and the form of prayer for pardon with the thought of the Saviour's nature preceding it. Thereafter following the order indicated by the meaning (and not by the actual order of words in the sentence), Sri Ramanuja explains the prayer in the word *namas* for the removal of (all)

hindrances. After this, he explains the supreme aim of life which is indicated by the suffix of the dative (or fourth case) in the words which end in the fourth case (*Narāyaṇāya*), which includes such aims as superior *bhakti* (*parabhakti*) that precede the attainment of the supreme aim (the attainment of Bhagavan and His *kainkarya*). Then he points out how Bhagavan is so full of compassion (as shown also in the second half of the *Charamas'loka*,) as to vouchsafe success both in regard to this life and in regard to what is to follow thereafter. (This he does) by the words stated to have been spoken by Bhagavan. Therefore all that is stated by (Ramanuja) in the (*S'araṇāgati*) *gadya* is intended to be conveyed by the *Dvaya*. This is indicated also by the words (in the *gadya*) which mean "uttering the *Dvaya* in this manner with an understanding of its meaning etc".

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS* :—

The *Āchāryas* of old have declared that the statement in such writings as the *Gadya* that superior *bhakti* (*para-bhakti*) and the like ((*i. e. parajnāna* and *parama bhakti*) have, for their result, *kainkarya* describes what occurs in the state of *mukti*. Since what follows later in order namely, the direct vision of the Lord (*parajnāna*) and the eager desire for the uninterrupted enjoyment of Bhagavan are preceded by the eager longing to do so, they are said to result from *para-bhakti*.

At the time of departure from the body, the grace of the Lord who dwells in the heart (of the *jīva*) grants to those who have performed *prapatti* that spiritual ripeness which would enable them to have a vision of the Lord. When the seed of a plant is soaked in the oil of *ankola* (*azhinjil*), it produces sprouts, leaves, flowers, fruits and the like in a few instants. So also, in just a few instants, the grace of the Lord enables the self to attain that spiritual perfection which would make possible *parabhakti*, *parajnāna* and *paramabhakti*. This state of perfection or ripeness which is referred to in the *gadya* is as appropriate as what is taught in such

treatises as the *Sātvata* concerning the special religious observances (*vrata*) for attaining *moksha* – for instance, that the minds of men rendered impure by stains caused by the wicked senses become pure at the time of their death, as a result of their residence in a place where there is a temple dedicated to Narayana. Such (great souls) as Nammalvar, Nathamuni and others enjoyed the Lord even before their death, owing to some special grace of the Supreme Being.

Nammalvar has, in the following passages and elsewhere, stated the meaning of *Dvaya*: – "Meditate[10] soon on the feet of Narayana and His consort and acquire a new life" (here the words up to *and acquire* express the *upāya* stated in the first part of *Dvaya* and what follows indicates the meaning of the second part); "The[11] man that has sought the feet of Bhagavan black as the raincloud and who has thereby attained new life" and "O Thou on[12] whose chest abides Lakshmi because she cannot endure separation from Thee even for an instant, etc".

*THE DETAILED INTERPRETATION OF DVAYA:*

*The meaning of S'rīman :—*

The word *S'rīman Nārāyaṇa* which stands first in *Dvaya* refers to the *Supreme Reality (paratattva)* which is the refuge of every one. The determination of the person of the Supreme Reality is well known to be arrived at in the *s'rutis* by reason of His being the Lord of Sri and by the word 'Narayana.' The word *S'rīmat* in the first part (of *Dvaya*) is to show that, when Narayana becomes the Redeemer, He is with His attribute (Lakshmi). Arulalapperumal Emberumanar states :— "Before understanding the substantive which has attributes, the attributes have to be understood. Thefore to understand Hari who has Lakshmi for His attribute, the attribute, 'Lakshmi', has (first) to be understood." That this (Lakshmi) is an attribute both in the first part

10. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-1-1.
11. Tiruvoymozhi: 7-2-11.
12. Tiruvoymozhi: 6-10-10.

(of the *Dvaya*) and in the second has already been explained in the chapter *Siddhopāya s'odhana* as also the principle that when the *upāya* has an attribute, there will be no duality of the *upāya*. (See page: 250).

The meaning of *S'rī* :— In the Bhagavat sastras (*Pāncharātra*), the word *S'rī* has been etymologically interpreted in six ways :— (1) *s'rīyate* (is resorted to); (2) *s'rayate* (resorts to); (3) *s'rnoti* (listens); (4) *s'rāvayati* (makes listen); (5) *s'rnāti* (removes); (6) *s'rīnati* (makes ripe). The other words that are required to make the meaning clear have to be understood from what is appropriate (in the context) and on the strength of *pramāṇas*. (1) & (2) *S'rīyate* and *S'rayate* :— Among them when we take the word to mean that She (Lakshmi) is resorted to by those who desire spiritual re-birth and that she resorts to the Supreme Ruler of all in order to give them spiritual rebirth, we may take the following *s'loka* (for authority) :— "When Thy[13] beloved Lord is displeased with a man who has committed serious offences in order, like a father, to reform him, Thou, O mother, sayest to Him, "What is this? Is there any man in the world who has no faults?" and persuadest Him by suitable devices to accept the offender by making Him forget (*vismārya*) his offences. Therefore art Thou our mother." As stated in this *s'loka*, she helps to mitigate the anger of the Supreme Ruler who wields the rod of punishment for the sake of promoting the welfare of the offender. Thus she sees to it that the Lord's natural compassion becomes the cause of the man's (spiritual) rebirth. The word Sri, in this interpretation, would describe her greatness as a mediator (who intercedes on behalf of the *jīva*) owing to her excessive love which is that of a mother. The word *vismārya*, which means 'by making him forget' has, for its purport, as in the word *avignāta* (in *avignāta*[13A] *sahasrāms'u*), which literally means (not knowing), the removal of the thought of punishing" entertained by the omniscient Iswara. The same is the meaning of the word 'fascinated' in the

13. Sri Gunaratnakosam 52
13 A. Vishnu Sahasranamam

passage, "He who is fascinated by the [14]charms of Lakshmi, the lotus-born etc" The word 'mediator' (*purushakāra*) means "another intelligent being who is sought as a means or *upāya* for securing the favour of an intelligent being who can satisfy the wants of one". This mediator or '*purushakāra*' is the mediate (as distinguished from the direct) cause for the attainment of the (desired) fruit.

We have already pointed out in *Nikshepārakshā*, as an authority, that by (her) very nature, by the practice (of the wise), by what we see in worldly affairs and by the words of *gurus*, and so also by the *s'ruti* and *smriti*, dependence on an (interceding) mediator is established (as a rule to be followed). "By Her very nature" means "By her nature in which there is no admixture of the anger arising from mental strength characteristic of a father and in which love (as for a child) resulting from motherly feelings becomes over-whelming." It is her nature (always) to say: "There is [15]no one who does not commit an offence": "Who will get[16] angry, O best of monkeys, with these Rakshasis who are under the authority of a king and being servants, render service to him ?" "I [17]cannot endure (to see) the sufferings of these servants of Ravana and therefore I pardon their offences". Her being the Lord's favourite is also such that, if she should intercede (on our behalf), the Lord cannot refuse. Since her very nature is such, it cannot be said that, to secure her help, the intercession of some one else will be needed and so on *ad infinitum*. As (an instance of) the practice of the wise, it is well-known from the *Purāṇas*, that, when Brahma and others were afraid to approach the Lord on seeing His wrath against His enemy, Hiranya, which arose owing to His intense love for Prahlada, they approached the Supreme Ruler, who was then in the form of Nrisimha, with Lakshmi as their leader (mediator) and praised Him. (Instances) may be seen also in

14. Tiruvoymozhi: 3-10-8
15. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 116-44
16. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 116-38
17. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 116-40

such contexts as the following :— "The renowned[18] Lakshmana thus spoke *to Ṣītā* and the noble-minded Rama." "Lakshmana, the[19] descendent of Raghu, seized the two feet of his brother, Sri Rama, and said these words, in the presence of Sita." In worldly affairs, too, this may be seen in kings pardoning the servants of the zenana as a result of even slight propitiation though their offences are great. This idea is also the purport of the *s'loka*:—"O Mother Lakshmi ![20] We who find our sole delight in rendering service to Thee and have only that as our aim, approach the Lord, look at Him and delight in serving Him, here and elsewhere, with the idea that He is Thy Spouse, in the same way as the people of Mithila looked upon Sri Rama as the bridegroom and the beloved husband of Sita". The words of *gurus* are such passages as that of Nammalvar who says :— "O Thou[21] on whose chest abides Lakshmi, who says she cannot endure separation from Thee even for an instant". Texts may also be seen in support of this in the *s'rutis* which are in the form of *S'rī Sūktas*. The *Smritis* based on these are the words of Sounaka and others—such as the following :-"The man[22] who begs for the attainment of Bhagavan, who is the purport of all words, should, of necessity, seek the protection also of Lakshmi. It is not enough to perform *prapatti* to the Lord alone". Since it is evident from many *pramāṇas* that Lakshmi plays the role of a mediator interceding at the feet of the Lord, it is but proper to understand it (in this way) in this context. Thus she is resorted to as a mediator and as the attribute of *Siddhopāya*.

As stated in the following *s'lokas* ;— "O Lakshmi,[28] with a countenance as delightful as the moon! When we consider Bhagavan and Thee separately, (we see) that the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Bhagavan and His being the Supreme Ruler over all are the outcome of the superiority resulting from His being associated with Thee. Therefore Thou art that aspect of His which declares Thy Lord as being such and such." "Thou art, O

18. Ramayana : Ayodhyakandam 31 - 2
19. Ramayana : Ayodhyakandam 15 - 6
20. Srigunaratnakosa : 51.
21. Tiruvoymozhi : 6 - 10 - 10.
22. Sounaka Samhita :
28. Srigunaratnakosa 28

Lakshmi[29], the property of Bhagavan solely by Thine own will. Though His greatness (and superiority) result from Thee, they are not dependent on any one else for the reason given above. A gem is precious because of its radiance; still it should not be considered as having no worth (in itself). Its natural value does not diminish and is not dependent on anything else ",—(as stated in these *s'lokas*) she is attached to Bhagavan (the *Siddhopāya*) like rays to the sun and the like, contributing to His splendour.

When we take the etymological meaning to be that she is to be reverenced by all, while she (herself) reveres the Supreme Ruler over all, she is the lady entitled to the service of all (of us). She is herself of the nature of a *s'esha* to the Lord as stated in: "Thy beloved[30] Spouse is Bhagavan who is called Purushottama" and in the *s'loka* :— "All things,[31] those that move and those that do not move, are, O Goddess that rulest over Srirangam, for Thy *līlā*. The eternal *sūris* who are said to be constantly looking at the region of eternal enjoyment *(bhoga)* namely, Vaikunta, were appointed to be Thy servants. By Thy compassion alone are we among those who are protected. Thy *s'eshī* is Bhagavan; all the rest are subject to Thy grace". When the (etymological) meaning of the word *S'rī* is taken to be as stated in the *s'loka* : "The[32] whole world depends on Lakshmi for support" that all things depend upon Her for protection and that she is attached to all things, that aspect of the Lord of *S'rī* which is declared by such words as Narayana (Vishnu and Vasudeva) is declared also of Vishnu's consort. The author on *S'rī Bhashya*, too, has said *Baghavatī S'rī* in the same way as He says *Bhagavan Nārāyaṇa* in that context; *(i. e.)* he calls Her *Bhagavatī* to show that She has the same distinction as Her Spouse.

(3) & (4) When the (etymological) meaning (of Sri) is taken to be, 'She listens' (*s'rṇoti*) and She makes listen (*s'rāvayati*) it would mean: " When we who have offended (against the Lord)

29. Srigunaratnakosa: 31
30. Chatussloki
31. Srigunaratnakosa : 22
32. Alvandar : Stotram - 37

pray to Her that she should persuade Him to be accessible to us on our approaching His feet for protection, she listens to the cry of suffering of those who have sought Her as a refuge and pleads (to the Lord) on our behalf and helps to mitigate our suffering. The words which (literally) state her activity (really) aim at stating Her role as a mediator. Having heard from Him these words: "Those who[32A] seek my two feet as their sole *upāya* or refuge — I myself take them, O, my beloved! out of *samsāra*", and also "Compassion[33] is a supreme virtue", she would, when the proper occasion arises, say, like the female pigeon to the male pigeon in the *sloka*:— "Listen, my beloved [34]husband, with attention to what I am going to say for your good. He who has sought refuge under you should be protected even if it be at the cost of your life". It may also be considered to have the following meanings:— Having heard from the Supreme Ruler that He is ever bent on the advancement of the world's welfare, she would offer her advice to be listened to even by her enemies as in the passage:— "If you should[35] desire to save your abode (*viz.* Lanka) and to avoid a horrible death, it would be in your interest to obtain the friendship of Sri Rama, who is the best of men".

(5) "When the etymological meaning (of Sri) is taken to be that she *removes* all faults (*sṛnati*), it would mean that she removes all hindrances in the way of those who have adopted the *upāya* (namely *prapatti*), such as *karma*, and this idea is brought out in the following passages:— "In all *siddhāntas* (systems[37] of religious thought) and in the *Vedanta*, it has been declared that when Bhagavan affords protection, He does it always with Lakshmi, who is the very embodiment of compassion, by His side", and so also, "Lakshmi[38] who resides in the ever fragrant lotus destroys all the (past) *karma* of *jīvas*".

32a. Varahapuranam
33. Ramayana. Sundarakanda: 38-39.
34. Itihasa Samucchayam 10-51.
35. Ramayana: Sundarakanda 21 . 19
37. Lakshmitantram 28 - 14
38. Tiruvoymozhi 4 - 5 . 11

(6) In the etymological interpretation, " She makes the world ripe by her qualities " (*sṛnāti*), the root (*S'ri*) would mean that, by her attributes like compassion, she enables those who have sought her protection to become ripe enough to have the qualities necessary for rendering service to the Lord. This idea is brought out in the passage :— " Having[39] Thy grace and the grace of Thy Consort who abides in the lotus, I will sweep the floor of Thy temple ". Bearing in mind all these excellences (of Lakshmi) stated in all these interpretations, Alavandar wrote :— " Thy name[40] too is *S'rī*. How can we have the fitness to praise Thee ? " Bhattar, too, had in mind her being unconditionally gracious and said :- " Bhagavan[41] is ever gracious because of His association with Thee. Thy graciousness is not due to any cause or condition. It exists of its own accord, for art Thou not Sri ? " Among these meanings those that are appropriate to Bhagavan's being the *upāya* should be borne in mind in regard to the first part (of *Dvaya*), while those that are appropriate to Bhagavan's being the object of attainment should be borne in mind in regard to the second part (of *Dvaya*).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

In the surrender of such as one's essential nature (and the burden of protection etc.), the Master is well known, to those who see with the eye of the *s'rutis*, as the *upāya* or means and as one to whom the surrender is made. He is also the *upeya* (the object of attainment).

Though the word *S'rīman* means in general 'one who is associated with *S'rī*,' yet here, as a consequence of the *pramāṇas* (*i. e.*) *S'ruti* which says (Lakshmi is His Spouse) it means the husband or Spouse of *S'rī*.

39. Tiruvoymozhi 9 - 2 - 1 (i. e.) 9 - 2 - 1
40. Chatussloki : 1
41. Srigunaratnakosa : 29

The relationship which appears to be general really means, on the strength of the *S'ruit*, the specific relationship (of being the spouse). Since He is called the Spouse of Her who is resorted to for protection and who is (also) the world's mother, His being the Supreme Being and His easy accessibility are both indicated (thereby). Though *S'rī* is included in the word *(Nārā)* (in Narayana), she is taken here separately in order to show that there is a difference between her and other things (included in *Nārā*) (in that she has omnipresence and other such qualities). She is shown as an attribute (of the Lord) (in the word *S'rīman*) in order to bring out the idea of her existence solely for Her Spouse, in accordance with the *pramāṇas (i. e.* of Her own will and that of Her Lord).

*THE MEANING OF THE SUFFIX MATUP (IN S'RĪMAN):*

Though suffixes[42] like *matup* have (all) the following meanings :— 'excess' 'censure' 'praise' 'eternal connection'. 'superiority (over others)', 'association', and 'the statement of mere existence', yet here, by special usage, it indicates 'eternal connection' which is well-known from the *pramāṇas.* This eternal connection between Bhagavan and Sri is indeed such that even when He assumed the form of a Brahmacharin (in Vamanavatara), He is said 'to have concealed, with the deer-skin, His Spouse, abiding in His chest'.

The two objections that have been raised by some in this context are not sound : The first objection is that the suffix *matup* is not employed when, of two things that are put in grammatical apposition or co-ordination *(sāmānādhikaraṇya)*, one is inseparable from the other and cannot exist without the other. For instance, when we say " Brahman is *Ānanda*, Brahman and *Ānanda* (bliss) are in grammatical apposition or co-ordination with each other. Since *ānandam* or bliss is an inseparable attribute of Brahman, *matup* is not added to it as a suffix. But when we

42. Vartika : 5 . 2 - 14

say, 'the man having a stick *(dandī)*', the suffix *matup* comes after *danda* (stick), because the stick can be separated from the man and can exist without the man. So the objector says that since the suffix occurs in *S'rīman*, *S'rī* should be considered as separable from Narayana (as in *Dandī*) which is put in apposition with it.

The second objection is as follows:—"If *S'rī* is separable from Narayana and can exist where He is not (as during Sita's separation from Sri Rama) the two words *S'rī* and the word meaning Bhagavan should not be put in apposition or co-ordination without the suffix, but we do find them in grammatical apposition or co-ordination when Sri Krishna says:— "Among women,[43] I am the deity of fame, *S'rī* (Lakshmi) and *Vāk* (Saraswati)" and also in the sentence:— "Bhagavan is[44] Lakshmi who abides in the lotus".

These (two) objections are unsound for the following reasons:- The existence of the suffix does not, by itself, determine whether there is inseparable connection or no. For example: By the principle enunciated in *Brahma Sūtras* 2 - 3 - 29, "The *jīva* is called *jnāna* because the attribute *jnāna* or knowledge is an essential and distinctive quality of the *jīva*, in the same way as Brahman is called *Ānanda* (bliss), because *Ānanda* is an essential and distinctive quality of Brahman." Here there is inseparable connection between the *jīva* and *jnāna* and the two are put in apposition with each other, whereas usage such as the *jīva* is one having *jnāna* (*Jnānavān*) is also frequently found. That is, though there is inseparable connection between the *jīva* and *jnāna*, the suffix *matup* is attached to *jnāna*, as in *dandī*, where the connection is separable. It is clear from this that the existence or non-existence of the suffix *matup* does not, of itself, afford evidence about the separability or inseparability of connection.

(NOTE: * *Sriman, jnanavan, dandi* have also the suffix *matup* though in different variations).

43. Bhagavad Gita: 10 - 34
44. Tiruvoymozhi: 6 - 3 - 6

When it is said, for instance, "The king himself is all the subjects", where there is no suffix *matup* after the word *lokāh* (subjects) in the appositional use, it cannot be stated that there is inseparable connection between the king and his subjects and that the latter cannot exist without him, for the meaning of the sentence is something entirely different (from separability or inseparability of connection). So the proper thing to do is to understand the nature of the connection with the help of other *pramāṇas* which bring it out clearly (and not merely by the existence or non-existence of the suffix *matup*).

"Here (in regard to Lakshmi's inseparable connection with Bhagavan), since the *pramāṇas* declare eternal connection (between them), both in the state when they are sought as *upāya* and in the state when the fruit (of the adoption of the *upāya*) is enjoyed and since in this *mantra* (*Dvaya*), this idea of inseparable connection needs to be stressed, the *matup* indicates that the two stand inseparably connected, both in the first part of *Dvaya* and in the second part and this conclusion is arrived at on the strength of such *pramāṇas* as the following :— "Lakshmana,[45] the descendant of Raghu, seized the two feet of Sri Rama firmly and said these words *in the presence of Sītā*", and "You will[45A] enjoy yourself *in the company of Sītā* on the slopes of the mountains and whether you are awake or asleep, I will render every form of service to you". (The first passage describes their inseparability in the state of *upāya* and the second in the state of the attainment of the fruit, namely, the rendering of service to them (*kainkarya*). Nammalvar, too, realised in his mind this inseparability in the following passages :— O, Thou, on whose[46] chest resides Lakshmi, whose home is the lotus, because she cannot endure separation from Thee for an instant !, "While Lakshmi[47] with her beautiful bracelets and Thou stand together, I see that the supreme end of existence is to enjoy Thee and render service to Thee like the eternal

45. Ramayana: Aranyakandam: 15 - 6
45 A. Do. Ayodhyakanda. 31 - 2
46. Tiruvoymozhi: 6 - 10 - 10
47. Tiruvoymozhi: 4 - 9 - 10

*suris* and other selves" (the former describes the state of *upāya* and the latter the state of attainment) and so also in;' Here (where[48] we adopt the means or *upāya*) and there (in Vaikunta) where we enjoy Bhagavan, there is no one other than Narayana who is ever found in (intimate) connection with Lakshmi". ((48) describes both the states). This realisation (of inseparable connection between Bhagavan and Sri, is essential for seeking the Lord's protection without any misgivings or hesitation and whenever we desire it.

### *THE MEANING OF THE WORD NĀRĀYAṆA AND THE QUALITIES DISCLOSED IN IT:—*

Even the intercession of the mediator which appears as a requisite is effective (only because of the relationship between *Nārāyaṇa* and the *jīva* and because of His qualities which are disclosed in the word *Nārāyaṇa*. (*i. e.* It is because Narayana is intimately associated with the *jīvas* and has certain great qualities that Lakshmi's intercession proves effective). This may be seen in the passage:— "Bhagavan may[49] even say:" "My devotees will never commit offences. Even if they offend, it is only for my glory (to bring out my unique forgiveness").

It may be asked whether it is not enough to say *S'rīman* (and not Sriman Narayana) as the word *Śrīmān* by itself has been declared to be one of the names of Bhagavan in the *s'loka*:— *S'rīdharah*.[49A] *S'rīkarah*: *S'reyah*: *S'rīmān*, *Lokatrayās'rayah* and elsewhere. The answer is as follows:— "The word *S'rīman* is here used as an adjective qualifying Narayana, because the word *Nārāyaṇa* is required here (in *Dvaya*) in the first part in order to enable us to bear in mind the special qualities (indicated by that word) which are adapted for His being the *upāya* and, in the second part, in order to show that Narayana, the *S'eshī*, who has both kinds of *vibhūti*, is the object of attainment.

48. Tiruvoymozhi: 7 - 9 - 11
49, Perialvar Tirumozhi: 4-10-2
49 A. Sahasranamam

Though the word 'Narayana' used here (in *Dvaya*) has, for its purport, all the qualities which were etymologically derived from the word in the chapter on the *moolamantra*, yet, since in the first part (of *Dvaya*) the aim of the word 'Narayana' is to show His being the refuge, the following are the principal among the qualities to be borne in mind : affection (like that of a cow for the calf), that of being the *Swāmin* or Master, good nature, easy accessibility, omniscience, omnipotence, irresistible will or purpose, supreme compassion, gratitude, firmness, perfection or fulness, supreme generosity and the like. These qualities have been briefly told in such passages as the following:— "O, Thou[50] that art full of matchless qualities, that ownest the three worlds, O, Thou, that art my Saviour and that dwellest on the mountain Tiruvengadam which is longed for by hosts of gods and *rishis* ! (*Soulabhya*)".

Of these *vātsālya* or affection is the tenderness which accepts a man for protection ignoring his offences, as in the *s'loka* : "I will never[51] ignore one who comes to me like a friend, even if there be faults in him. This will not be censured by the good". It is (a quality) needed for not avoiding Him on account of one's offences. *Swāmitva* or the attribute of being the master is the special kind of association existing between Bhagavan and the *jīva*, which is disclosed in the *praṇava* and the like. This is necessary to inspire confidence that He will protect (us) for His own glory. *Saus'īlya*, or good nature, is shown in His intimate companionship with such people of low birth as huntsmen, monkeys and cow-herds in spite of His superiority to all beings. This (quality) is necessary for inspiring confidence which would not make one despair saying : "Where is He[52] who is the Master of all and who is armed with the discus and where am I"? but which would encourage one to expect Him to render even such service as driving the chariot and conveying a message. *Soulabhya* or easy accessibility consists in 'His being[53] within the range of the eyes of all men' even though

50. Tiruvoymozhi : 6 - 10 - 10
51. Ramayana : Yuddhakanda : 18 - 3
52. Tiruvoymozhi : 5 - 1 - 7
53. Sri Ramanuja : Gita Bhashyam.

He is beyond the reach of even such great *yogis* as Sanaka and Sanandana. This (qualiiy) is necessary in order that we may not give up the longing for Him owing to a notion that He is too difficult of approach. Omniscience consists in His seeing all things, as stated in such *s'lokas* as the following:— "There[54] is nothing in any of the three worlds that is not known to Thee", and "I bow to [55]Bhagavan who, by His very nature, sees all things at the same time". This is necessary for the thought that there is nothing unknown to Him among the good things to be given to those who have sought His protection and among the hindrances to be removed from them. Omnipotence consists in the ability to accomplish what cannot be accomplished (by others). This is necessary to give us the assurance that, though we are now in *samsāra* (or bondage of births and deaths), He can make us enter the assembly of the eternal *sūris*. *Satyasankalpatva* means that His will or purpose can never be thwarted even by Himself. This is necessary for the confidence that we should have that the words: "I will release you from all sins", will never prove futile. Supreme compassion is the desire to remove the suffering of others without any thought of one's own interests. This is necessary for the knowledge that He will pardon on some pretext (*vyāja*) even those who have committed innumerable offences, as in the *s'lokas* :— "I will never [56]give up the man who seeks me in the manner of a friend, even though he has faults", and "Fetch [57]him, O Sugriva, best of monkeys, whether he be Vibhishana or even Ravana himself. I promise security to him". Gratitude consists in looking upon even trivial acts of kindness with the greatest regard, as if they were supreme deeds of helpfulness and never forgetting them. (Instances of this) may be seen in such *s'lokas* as the following:— "Since Sri Rama[58] is large-hearted, he does not remember even hundreds of offences committed by others against him. He delights (on the other hand) on even a single act of help", and "That cry[59]

54: Ramayana: Yuddhakanda 17-35.
55. Nyaya Tatvam.
56. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda : 18 - 3
57. Ramayana: Yuddha kanda 18-34
58. Ramayana : Ayodhyakanda: 1-11
59. Mahabharata : Udyogaparva : 47-22

for help uttered aloud by Droupadi even from a distance calling me "Govinda! "—that cry is never away from my mind like a debt that has increased with the interest accumulated on it". This quality makes one say to oneself: "If He sees anything of worth done by me within the limits of my ability, He will never forsake me". Firmness is the quality of persistence in protecting suppliants. This is necessary to inspire the faith that He will never forsake us, even though others who are very intimate with Him try to dissuade Him, as (when Sri Rama said):—"I will never[59A] give up the man who comes to me in the manner of a friend". *Paripūrṇatvam* (perfection or fullness) consists in (His) having all objects that are desired or desirable. This is necessary to make us endeavour to serve Him in the way that is within our limited power, with the knowledge that in what we offer to him (*upahāra*), He will consider only the fervour of emotion or feeling and not measure its worth or value. This may be seen in the following words (of the Lord):— "Though[60] what is offered to me by my devotees is atomic, it appears very great to me owing to their love. What is offered to me by those wanting in devotion, however great it might be, never gives me delight". "Whatever[61] is given to me with love, be it only such trivial things as a leaf, a flower, a fruit or even (mere) water, I eat it, because it is given with devotion by one who is devout". Supreme generosity is the liberality in making gifts which makes a person feel that he has not done enough, even when he has given all that he possesses without any thought of the slightness of the endeavour on the part of the person benefited, the greatness of the benefit conferred or the unworthiness of the beneficiary. This is a quality which induces men like *Dadhibhanda and others to ask with importunity for the great benefits of spiritual life even for those who are connected with them. Thus such qualities in the Redeemer as are useful for

59A. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18 - 3.

60. Bhagavatam: 10 - 81 - 3

61. Bhagavad Gita 9 - 26

*NOTE: Dadhibhanda begged Sri Krishna for spiritual benefits not only for himself but for those related to him.

seeking His protection and the manner in which they are useful should be borne in mind.

In the state of practising the *vidyās* or forms of meditation (prescribed in the *s'rutis*), only certain qualities (of Brahman) pertaining to that *vidyā* are meditated upon. Still in the state of enjoyment of the fruit of the meditation, the object of enjoyment is Brahman with *all* his qualities. In the case of the word occurring in the second part of *Dvaya*, though all qualities may be present, since the aim is to attain Narayana with such qualities as are essential for our service to Him which arise from His essential nature and from His qualities, the most important qualities to be understood are His being the *S'eshī* and His being capable of affording (perfect) bliss.

In another chapter (in chapter 11 *Parikara vibhāga*), we have (already) stated that here (in the word Narayana in the first part of *Dvaya*) the determination to do what is agreeable and the avoidance of what is adverse are indicated on account of the relationship (of master and servant) implied in it.

There are some *(āchāryas)* who take *S'rīman Nārāyaṇa-charaṇau* as a single compound word. There are others who take it as three separate words *S'rīman!*, *Nārāyaṇa!*, *Charaṇau* and supply the word *tava* (Thy) between Narayana and *charaṇau*. In this interpretation, they have in mind such passages as "[62]Do not approach those who say these words". "O Thou with eyes like the lotus, O Vasudeva, O Vishnu .. ...be Thou my *upāya*". "May [62A]Thou Thyself be my *upāya*!" and the Tamil verse: "O Thou[63] on whose chest resides Lakshmi who dwells in the lotus 'O Thou,[64] my Redeemer, I seek Thy feet as my *upāya* having no other *upāya* and no other object of attainment", "O Sriman Narayana, my Master" and other such *mantras* and also *S'araṇāgati gadya* which is an elaboration of *Dvaya*. (In all these

62. Yama's words: Vishnupuranam III-7-33

62A. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37 - 3

63. Tiruvoymozhi: 6 . 10 - 10.

64. Alavandar Stotram: 22.

instances Bhagavan is addressed in the vocative case and the prayer in the *gadya* seeking His protection follows). So also the first part of *Dvaya* is interpreted thus:— 'O Thou with Lakshmi for Thy Spouse, O Narayana, I seek *Thy* feet for refuge,' (understanding the word *Thy* (*tava*)). Thus, whether we take it as a single compound word or as three separate words, there is no difference in the manner in which the attribute (adjective) *S'rī* and the substantive Narayana stand in relation to each other in the first part of *Dvaya* and in the second.

## *THE MEANING OF CHARAṆAU.*

The word *Charaṇau* means not merely 'the two feet' but by implication, the divinely auspicious form (of the Lord), (which is not of matter or *prakriti*). That the Lord of Sri is the Supreme Deity superior to everyone else and that He is in association with an eternal form are most important among things that should be known. This may be seen from such passages as the following;— "He who[65] has the true knowledge that Bhagavan has an eternal form and so also, O Poushkara, that He is superior to everyone else—Him does Bhagavan approach". Therefore in the word *S'rīman Nārāyaṇa*, we should bear in mind His being the Supreme Reality that is easily accessible and in the word *Charaṇau*, His having an eternal form. Even by those who have no clear idea of the essential nature of the Divine Being (that He is *jnāna* and *ānanda*) and that He has the qualities mentioned before—even for them the object of meditation should be the divinely auspicious *form* which is constituted wholly of *s'uddha sattva* (and not matter), which, in those who have a knowledge of it, removes the contraction of knowledge (due to past *karma*) and which suggests Him as the Supreme Reality and His easy accessibility. Owing to its being the principal (meditation), (Sri Ramanuja) speaks of the divinely auspicious form in the *Gadya* before stating the qualities. Though Tirumangai Alwar had a true knowledge of the essential nature of the Divine Being, yet he spoke of himself as one who

65. Poushkara Samhita:

does not believe in the Supreme Reality (that is *jnāna* and *ānanda*) like atheists who consider the body as the soul, because of his extreme devotion to the eternal *form* which is delightful even to Iswara (who is *jnāna* and *ānanda*). This idea is expressed in the *s'loka*: "The divinely[66] auspicious form of Bhagavan is more delightful and more wonderful to Him than His own essential nature (which is *jnāna* and *ānanda*)".

The divinely auspicious form of the Supreme Ruler is pure and auspicious (*s'ubha*) and is a fit object of meditation (*ās'raya*) as declared in the following passages :— "May I see[67] that holy countenance of Vishnu with eyes like lotus in the form which He has assumed of His own will and which, when remembered, removes the sins of men!" "Sri Rama[68] fascinates the eyes of men with the beauty (of his form) and their minds with such qualities as generosity." Those who are in the bondage of *samsāra* may be objects for meditation (*ās'raya*) but there is no purity or auspiciousness in them. The essential nature (*svarūpa*) of Bhagavan is pure and auspicious but it cannot be an object of meditation.

The pure and essential form of the *jīva* (free from bondage) cannot come back to *samsara*, since it is without the qualities necessary for doing so; but by its nature, it has in it in the potentiality of being associated with such qualities. Therefore it has not the purity and auspiciousness which are opposed to anything that is of the nature of a blemish, nor can it be a fit object of meditation. When a released soul (*mukta*) assumes a form it can become an object of meditation as also eternal *sūrīs* (*nityas*) who have form, but neither of them has the purity and auspiciousness which can release the *baddhas* from *samsāra*. Therefore it is only the divinely auspicious *form* (of the Lord) which has purity and auspiciousness and the fitness of being an object of meditation, which are both necessary to the aspirant to *mukti*.

66. Chatussloki: 4.
67. Vishnupuranam: 5 - 17.
68. Ramayana: Ayodhyakanda 3 - 28

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

It is known that the (divinely auspicious) *form* of the Master is of more importance (to the aspirant to *mukti*) than His essential nature *svarūpa*, because it is capable of being grasped easily both by the high (like Brahma) and by the low (like ordinary men) and because it can produce (in those that contemplate it) *bhakti* and *jnāna*.

In the sentence prescribing *s'araṇāgati*, namely, " Seek refuge under me alone ", (*charamas'loka*) also, the Lord who had assumed a form appeared as the place of refuge. From the *s'astras*, it is well known that this divinely auspicious form in the five states *Para*, *Vyūha*, *Vibhava*, *Antaryāmī* or *Hārda* and *Archā* is pure and auspicious and suitable for meditation.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

Here (in the *Dvaya*) the feet of the Lord should be meditated on as the *upāya*, because they are easier of being grasped by the mind for meditation and have such virtues as raising compassion (in Him).

The servant resorts to the feet (of the Lord) because of their being extremely appropriate for resort and because as stated in the saying: " It is not possible to withstand the seizure of the feet ", they are capable of increasing the compassion of the Lord and also because they have in them the power of affording unique enjoyment as stated in the *s'loka* :— "How can[69A] a man who has his mind set on Thy lotus feet which are full of nectar ever desire anything else? Will the bee ever seek the worthless Ikshuraka flower, while the lotus in there full of honey?" This idea is well-expressed in the following passages :— "I am a [69B]suppliant at Thy two feet which protect the gods and the *asuras* alike ". "Those [70]lotus feet of the Lord which can secure the state of bliss for me — there is

69a. Alavandar: Stotram: 27
69b. Jitanta Stotram: 1-2
70. Jitanta Stotram: 1-10

no other thing than they, which, in any of my births, can contribute to my (spiritual) welfare." "My *upāya*[71] is in Thy Two feet", "I give[72] up, O Lord, all *upāyas* and also the desire to enjoy the self (in its freed state) and am a suppliant before Thy feet which once measured the universe", "He seized the two feet of his brother (Sri Rama) firmly", "O my[73] child, I caught the two feet (of the Lord) whose soles are red, which are well-set and which are adorned with toes that are beautiful, tender and rosy (in colour) and bowed with my head. "I have sought[74] the feet as (my) refuge". "He who has[75] sought as an *upāya*, (for protection) the two feet that destroy the sins of those who perform *prapatti*". and others. Those who followed this tradition (like Nammalvar and Alavandar) said also :— "I was[76] firmly set under Thy feet (for protection)"; "I have no[77] other *upāya* and no other object of attainment than Thee and am a suppliant before Thy feet". (So also) those who were proficient in the *śāstras* (like Parasara Bhatta) said, "Hari has[78] a form full of such qualities as fragrance and tenderness. The means that can secure Him for us are His two feet".

In the word *charaṇau* (the two feet) the word 'alone' is implicit in the meaning ((*i. e.* the two feet alone) as in "seek [79]refuge under Him *alone* by all possible means," "Satagopan[80] who resorted to His feet *alone* as the *upāya* and as the object of attainment" and "The[81] feet of our Lord who lies on the serpent (*śesha*) —His feet are *alone* our *upāya*".

*SANSKRIT ŚLOKA :—*

"It has been said, by some who are stupid (*manda*), that the use of the word *charaṇau* (the two feet — the dual of *charana*)

71. Jitanta Stotram: 1–13
72. Jitanta Stotram: gadya
73. Mahabharata; Aranya parva: 191-134
74.
75. ?
76. Tiruvoymozhi: 6–10–10
77. Alavandar Stotram, 22
78. Parasara Bhatta.
79. Bhagavad Gita: 18 - 62.
80. Tiruvoymozhi: 5 - 8 - 11.
81. Tiruvoymozhi: 5 - 10 - 11.

is against the interpretation that Bhagavan with *S'rī* as His attribute is intended (for in that case 'the four feet' should be the words). This is silly because this objection is refuted by the word *S'rīmat* which distinctly and explicitly states at the very beginning of the sentence "with His attribute *S'rī*". This indication of the attribute '*S'rī*' is first heard in the sentence and cannot therefore be annulled by the dual form, namely, 'the two feet' (which comes later in the sentence). The reasoning which says that the plural form "many or four-feet" should have been used in that case will appear ridiculous to those who are acquainted with literature, for the dual form is used, because the husband is the principal factor and his spouse is necessarily associated with him. When an emperor has a spouse, no one would dare to say that he has some one else (as a second ruler). So also, here, a serious statement has been recklessly made without due reflection.

It may be asked :— "When the Omnipotent Lord becomes the *upāya*, where is the need for this attribute *viz. S'rī?* If He needs her, it would follow that He is not omnipotent." The same objection could be made against the qualities (of Narayana) and the form *(vigraha)* (of Narayana) which are stated in the words *Nārāyaṇa* and *charaṇau* respectively. If it is maintained, in accordance with the *pramāṇas*, that the qualities and the form are His attributes and that as there is a special efficacy appropriate to them as such, the omnipotence (of the Lord) is not thereby annulled, then the same argument will hold good (in the case of *Ṣrī* also) because (Her being the *upāya* along with Bhagavan) has been stated by many authorities *(pramāṇas)* and because in the word *S'rīmat*, Sri's being the attribute is natural owing to her relationship of being the Spouse.

If, in spite of all this, it is held merely (on the ground of the (dual) *charaṇau* (the two feet) that the association with *S'rī* is mere **Upalakshaṇa* and does not signify that *S'rī* is also *upāya*,

***NOTE:** *Upalakshana*: a mere mark, token or sign to indicate Narayana who is recognised by that mark. An *Upalakshana* is not an essential feature of the object in question.

then the same thing would have to be said about His association with such things as qualities (and form). If it is held that since the word (*charaṇau*) is employed along with the word *Nārāyaṇa* stating that they are the *upāya*, the one who has the qualities and the form which are necessary for being the *upāya* is the *upāya*, the same thing can be said also (of *S'rī*) here. Such being the case, if it is held that in case Sri is considered an attribute, it would be against (the Lord's) omnipotence, there would be the same irreconcilability with that omnipotence, in expecting *Sri* to be the mediator (interceding on behalf of the *jīva*).

It is said in Bhattar's *S'rīguṇaratna-kos'am* :— "Though qualities like youth are common to Thee and Bhagavan, you have divided between yourselves for the sake of enjoyment (certain qualities) — such qualities as there should be in a man - namely, independence of all others, subjugation of enemies and firmness, in Bhagavan—and such qualities as there should be in a woman—namely, gentleness, existing only for the sake of the husband, compassion and patience, in Thee". In accordance with that *s'loka*, when the *jivas* offend Iswara who stands supreme in power with the characteristics of the masculine nature, of the nature of the father and of the ruler exercising control and such others, Lakshmi who has gentleness, affection and the like becomes the mediator interceding on their behalf. If it is said that this intercession as a mediator is subject to the independent will of the Lord, then it may be said without any contradiction by the *pramāṇas* that Iswara's being the *S'araṇya* or Protector with his attribute *S'rī* who participates in the performance of (Her husband's) duties is also due to His independent will.

## *THE MEANING OF THE WORD S'ARAṆAM*

"Here [81A] in *Dvayam*, the word *s'araṇam* which has the meanings *upāya*, *abode* and *protector* denotes only *upāya*". Since in

81 A Ahirbudhnya Samhita : 37 - 29.

the above *s'loka*, *upāya* has been pointed out as the special meaning here, it denotes *upāya*.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :—

By the very nature of *bharanyāsa* (the surrender of the burden or responsibility of protection), the Protector or Saviour is here (in *Dvaya*) placed in the position of other *upāyas*, in order that the *prapanna* may refrain from any effort on his own part.

It may be asked ·— When the Supreme Ruler is the means or *upāya* for attaining the fruit of His worship or adoration performed in accordance with the respective ordinances of the *s'astras* in the case of every *adhikārī* or competent person, where is the need for His being specially called the *upāya* here? The answer is :— " It is merely to show that the nature of *prapatti* is such that Iswara who is endowed with qualities like natural compassion is placed in it *(prapatti)* in the position of other *upāyas*.

If it be asked, "Since *prapatti* is adopted *in the place of bhaktiyoga*, why should Iswara be stated to be " In the place of other *upāyas*"? The answer is as follows:— " The fruit (of spiritual striving) is to be attained by *prapatti* being adopted as an accessory means or aid and by *upāsana* or meditation or adoration (*bhakti*) being adopted as the (main or primary) *upāya*. When there is no *upāsana* (or *bhakti*), that fruit has to be obtained by means of *prapatti* alone. This becomes possible only because Iswara is naturally possessed of such qualities as compassion. That is why it is said that Iswara stands in the case of the man destitute of *upāyas*, in the position of other *upāyas*. The man who is destitute of *upāyas* ordained for the attainment of the desired fruit and cannot bear the burden or responsibility (of adopting those *upāyas*) places (Iswara) who stands as the Protector in the position of other *upāyas* saying: " May Thou be my *upaya*!" It means " Instead of placing the burden of adopting other *upāyas* on my shoulders (literally, the head) may the granting of all the desired

fruits which could be obtained by bearing that burden be solely Thy burden or responsibility, since Thou art capable and compassionate!" Separating this aspect (from others, *viz.*, the accessories), *nikshepa* or *bharanyāsa* is called the primary means or *angī* (and not the accessory means). This includes the man's being without the responsibility for any effort on his own part. It is in view of this separation of *bharasamarpaṇam* (from its *angas* or accessories, *viz.*, the prayer that He should not expect one to do anything for oneself, that the word *s'araṇam* is used here only to denote *upāya*. (From this it would follow that the *prapanna* is care-free thereafter in regard to his protection.)

In some places the prayer to Iswara to be the *upāya* and *nikshepa* or *bharanyāsa* are spoken of separately (as if they were different, though, in reality, they are not different). This should be understood as being due to one of three reasons: (1) The word *upāya* is (then) used to mean only the prayer for protection without including the prayer that Iswara should be in the place of other *upāyas* which can be expected of the *prapanna*. (2) It may be to distinguish *bharasamarpaṇam* and the like distinctly and separately from the prayer for being the *upāya* or (3) Since the *samarpaṇam* or surrender is of three things *viz.*, *svarūpa* (essential nature), *bhara* (responsibility for protection) and *phala* (or the fruit to be attained), every one of them has to be stated as different from the other two. Therefore none of these can be said to be redundant, (The prayer for Iswara being the *upāya* refers to *bhara*; and the word *nikshepa* refers to *svarūpa*).

This aspect of Iswara being the *upāya* should be understood as the peculiar feature of *Nyāsa vidyā*. (Iswara's) *jnana*, power, and the like also appear in as much as they are required for this purpose.

*THE MEANING OF THE WORD PRAPADYE:*

Since verbs meaning 'to go' or 'to move' mean also 'to have a knowledge of' or 'to know', the root *pad* in the word *prapadye*, which means 'to go' means, here the specific knowledge required in this context. The knowledge, here, is the sure knowledge or faith that the Lord will save (us). Since faith which is the most important of the accessories or *angas* (to *prapatti*) is referred to here, the *sādhyopāya* with all its accessories is indicated here. If it be asked how, the answer is as follows :— The preposition *pra* (in *prapadye*) discloses the greatness or intensity of the faith which is its excellence. This excellence or intensity of faith would arise only when one bears in mind the mediatorship (of Lakshmi) and one's relationship with the Lord, the Lord's qualities and the like (form) which are respectively present in the words (*S'rīmat*) and *Nārāyaṇa*. By this intensity of faith, all doubts arising from the greatness of one's offences will disappear. This intensity of faith is necessary as stated in the *s'loka*: "The Rakshasas[82] had no confidence in (the effectiveness of) the Brahma missile (*astra*) with which Hanuman was bound. The result was that that missile which would never fail of its purpose became loose immediately. In the same way, if men had no faith in the efficacy of *prapatti*, it would be the same as if it had not been performed at all Therefore *prapatti* gives *moksha* soon to those who have faith in it". The potency of this certainty of belief is well known from the following passages :— "If a man[83] has no faith, he can never approach that Supreme Brahman", and "Hari is ever[84] present in all those who have no doubts. The Lord of Lakshmi (Madhava) is never present in those who doubt as a result of their reasoning or logic". If this intense faith is present, doubts will never arise during any inquiry (into Bhagavan's qualities and the like). Therefore intensity of faith at the first moment (of performing *prapatti*) which would never permit of later doubts is an accessory or *anga* of *prapatti*. Even if it is

82. Sanatkumarasamhita:
83. Mahabharata Santi parva 334 - 47.
84. Mahabharata Santi parva 359 - 71.

weak, Iswara who has begun to show His special grace will make it full and perfect". Has not the Saviour graciously stated: "I will never give[85] up the man who has come to me in the guise of a friend, whatever might happen'? Is not His grace of such a nature as is described in the *sloka*, about such things as even *anjali*:— "If a man[86] has folded his hands in worship to Thy feet at any time and in any manner, it will destroy all his sins at that very instant and lead to the attainment of good things. It will never prove futile". Therefore even weakness of faith will grow into deep and intense faith (in those who have performed *prapatti* with all its *angas*).

On this expression of intense faith stating, "I have made up my mind to beg Thee for being my *upāya*", the prayer (to Iswara) to be the *upāya* may be taken here as having been made and this would be in accordance with the following *pramāṇas*: "When what a man[87] desires cannot be attained with the help of any one else, a prayer is made, with intense faith, to one who has the required ability (to secure the object desired) that he should be the means or *upaya*. This prayer is *prapatti*; it is *saraṇāgati*". "The thought[88] of praying:— "May Thou alone be my *upāya*!" this is *saraṇāgati*. Let this be done towards Bhagavan". "Those who[89] say to Hari: "Be Thou my *upāya*" — never approach them". The *anga* or accessory called "seeking protectorship" is contained within this and is not separate or different from this.

It may be asked:— "What is the prayer in this first part of *Dvaya* for? Since in the second part, there is a prayer for the attainment of the desired end and the removal of hindrances thereto, the prayer here cannot be for the same as, in that case, there would be repetition or redundancy. When *prapatti* is adopted as an *anga* or accessory, the prayer might be said to be for *bhakti* as an *upāya*; but here, since *prapatti* is adopted as a direct and inde-

85. Ramayana. Yuddhakanda 18 - 3.
86. Alavandar: Stotram - 28.
87. Bharatamuni.
88. Ahirbudhnya Samhita 37-31
89. Vishnupuranam 3-7-33 (Yama's words to his agents).

pendent means, there cannot be any *upāya* which can be acquired and for which a prayer could be made (what, then, can this prayer be for?)". The answer to this question is as follows:— "The award of the desired fruit which finds a place (in the second part of *Dvaya*) is common to all *adhikārīs*, whatever be the *upāya* (*bhakti* or *prapatti*) that they adopt. Since *prapatti* is not an *anga* or accessory for any other *upāya* in the case of one who is destitute of any other *upāya* and who makes a surrender of everything (*svarūpa* - *bhara* - and *phala*), its superiority (to other *upāyas*) consists in the Saviour Himself standing in the place of the *upāya* and granting the fruit or desired end. Therefore what is prayed for here is the point that Iswara should accept the responsibility of protection (*bharasvīkāra*). But it may be asked again :— "Will not this prayer that the Lord should stand as the *upāya* mean the same as a prayer that He should grant the desired fruit or object without any other *upāya* being required as a further condition coming in between? In that case will not the prayer in the second part of *Dvaya* be redundant?" The answer to this question is as follows:— Since in the prayer of the above description (in the second part), what is required is stated separately because it is different in some points from the expectation in the prayer (in the first part), there is no redundancy; [(*i. e.*) in the prayer for Iswara being the *upāya*, there is no expectation of any fruit except that He should be the *upāya*; in the prayer in the second part there is expectation of the desired fruit]. It may also be explained thus: though the word signifying prayer (*bhaveyam*) has to be supplied in order to make the second part a complete sentence, in the first part praying for Iswara becoming the *upāya*, the fruit is asked for, but in a general way, while, in the second part, the purport is to specify the nature of that fruit.

The sum and substance of the first and the second parts, when duly determined, will amount to saying this:— "I am destitute of all *upāyas*; therefore in order that Thou mayst stand in the place of these *upāyas* and grant me the specific end that is desired, I surrender the responsibility for the protection of myself as stated

(in the s'astras)". Thus it (the *Dvaya*) is a surrender of the responsibility (for protection) accompanied by a special prayer This surrender, too, is the meaning of *prapadye* which indicates resolution (I resolve). We have (already) proved in many places with the help of *pramāṇas* and on the authority of traditional practice that the surrender of responsibility with all its accessories is the gist of the *s'āstras* on *prapatti* (*vide* chapters 11 and 12 on *Parikaravibhāga* and *Sāngaprapadana*).

The primary importance of the *nikshepa* (surrender) which is stated in another *mantra* for the performing of *prapatti* is the same here also, namely: "By this [90]*mantra* alone should a man surrender himself to me. He who has thus surrendered what ought to be surrendered will become one who has done what he ought to do".

The first person singular in *prapadye* (I resolve) which shows one to be the doer, proves that the way to win the favour of *Siddhopāya* (Iswara), who has the gift of *moksha* in His power, is some form of *vyāja* (*bhakti* or *prapatti*) which can be accomplished by the aspirant to *mukti* in accordance with the *s'āstras*.

In this (the first part of *Dvaya*) the specific *adhikārī* or competent person for the performance and the idea of helplessness (*kārpaṇya*), which is one of the accessories or *angas* of *prapatti*, are also hinted at as in the following passages:— "I who [90A]have no other *upāya* and no other Saviour" etc. "I am the [91]abode of all offences: I have no means or *upāya* for saving myself and have nothing else to attain than Thee," and "I have [92]not been firmly established in the performance of *dharma* (*i. e* I have not performed *karma yoga*;) neither have I realised the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of myself (i. e. I have not performed *jnāna yoga*: nor have I devotion to Thy lotus feet (*i. e.* I have not performed

90. Satyaki tantra
90A. Tiruvoymozhi: 6-10-10
91. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 37-30
92. Alavandar: Stotram: 22

*bhaktiyoga*". This is elaborated by Sri Ramanuja in the *S'araṇāgati gadya* in the words, "Having no other refuge or Saviour" and in the little *gadya (S'rī Ranga Gadya)* in the *chūrṇikā*, which says, "My soul is eternally subject to Thy control" and likewise in the *chūrṇikā* in *Vaikuṇtagadya* where he says, 'I realise that, in order to attain Him, I have no other means, even in thousands of crores of *kalpas* (1000 *yugas*), than seeking His two lotus feet". Arulalapperumal Emperumanar, too, has declared: "The [93]man who, owing to his powerlessness, has not the required *upāya* or means for attaining Bhagavan which is the end desired by him—that man should realise with faith that His feet are the *upāya* for securing His object" Since *prapatti* ordains, as an *upāya*, the surrender of the responsibility for protection *(bharasamarpaṇa)* which is adapted to the *adhikhārī* who is destitute of *upāyas*, it goes without saying (from the very logic of the matter) that it does not require the performance of any other action which is too hard (for him) to perform.

Thus in the word *prapadye* (I resolve to seek) accompanied by the word *s'araṇam* (refuge), four accessories may be considered as having been indicated: the faith that (the Lord) will protect, and so also seeking Him as the Saviour, the surrender of the self and (one's) helplessness *(kārpaṇya)*. We have already stated that the word Narayana with its adjective *(S'rīmat)* declares such things as Bhagavan's being the Master in accordance with such authoritative texts as the following:— "All beings,[93] those that move and those that do not move, are the body of Bhagavan. Therefore I should do what is good for them". This determination is the sixth *anga* and "The fifth [94]*anga* is the avoidance of what is displeasing to the Master." Therefore His being the Master suggests the determination to do what is agreeable (to Him) and the avoidance of what is disagreeable (to Him). In another chapter we have stated that these accessories, too, are to be thought of only once for the sake of the *upāya* (namely: *prapatti*). The use of

93. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 52-23 94. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 52-21

the present tense in the verb (*prapadye*) is, like (the use of present tense in the verb occurring in) the *mantra* uttered while cutting *kus'a* grass, to indicate the time when the *prapatti* is performed. (It does not mean, as the present tense sometimes means, that it should be done always). The views (held by some) that the present tense (in *prapadye*) shows that the intention is to enjoin the continuous performance of *prapatti* until the end of the present body, that it enjoins the continuance of faith which is one of the accessories until the fruit is attained and that it shows also the need for the continuance of such things as the determination to do what is agreeable (to the Lord) even after the performance of *prapatti*, as its accessories—these views are opposed to the *pramāṇas* which lay down (the rule) that this *upāya* (*prapatti*) with its accessories should be performed only once.

If they (*viz.* the accessories described above) continue (even after the performance of *prapatti* because of the excessive eagerness to attain the object and of their being enjoyable, it does not follow that this continuance is part and parcel of the *upāya* adopted in the first part (of *Dvaya*). Therefore the use of the present tense in this sentence (in *Dvaya*) which states the *upāya* does not refer to the continuance of uttering the *Dvaya* for the sake of the enjoyment arising from love which is expressed in Sri Ramanuja's *gadya* (namely - uttering the *Dvaya always* with an understanding of its meaning), (The meaning is: as an *upāya* a single performance or utterance will do; but when one finds it enjoyable, the *Dvaya* may be repeatedly uttered).

Thus the first part of *Dvaya* discloses the Lord's being the Saviour of all, the essential nature or *svarūpa* of *s'araṇāgati*, its accessories and the nature of the person qualified for its performance. From this it is evident also that the *jīva* has no other *upāya*.

*THE SECOND PART OF DVAYA:*

*S'araṇāgati* which has been thus described (in the first part) is capable of securing all desired ends, for it has been stated:—

"Only [95]so long as *prapatti* which can remove all sins has not been performed towards Thee, only so long will there be misery caused by the loss of wealth and the anxiety to regain it; only so long will there be the desire to win wealth, only so long will there be no realisation of the self being different from the body; only so long will there be the suffering of *saṃsāra*." Further the Saviour is supremely generous; "Is there [96]any other who is so generous as He and who can grant whatever is desired?" He stands ever ready with the determination to grant whatever is desired by the suppliants, for it has been said :— "If we receive[97] any thing from the Lord, He does not lose anything thereby. He will give us whatever we ask." (Such being the case) the question arises: "What is the object or end for which *prapatti* should be performed?" The second part of *Dvaya*, (as if in answer to this question), prays for that object (end or fruit), which would be in keeping with the Saviour who is supremely generous, in keeping with this special *upāya* (*prapatti*) which can secure the favour of One who is superior to all others, and in keeping with one's own essential nature (*svarūpa*) which will find its sole delight only in being His *s'esha*. As expressed in the passage: "The only[98] end which I seek is that the Lord should take me as His servant for His own pleasure", the second part prays for this desired end (namely, service to the Lord), including the removal of all hindrances to it. From this it also follows that the *jīva* should have no other interest or object.

In this context, the word *Nārāyaṇa* with the attribute qualifying it *(viz. S'rīmat)* discloses, primarily and in accordance with the *pramānas*, the Lord's being the Master and the like and so also the unsurpassed enjoyability of the Master who has countless qualities and the two *vibhutis* (glories) which make Him fit to be the object of attainment.

95. Vishnupurana: 1–9–73
96. Itihasa Samucchayam: 33-119
97. Tiruvoymozhi: 3–9–5
98. Tiruvoymozhi: 2–9–4

*THE MEANING OF THE WORD S'RĪMATE (IN THE SECOND PART OF DVAYA) :—*

Though Bhagavan who is thus endowed with the two *vibhūtis* (*Līlā* and *Nitya*) is the object of attainment, the word *S'rīmate* (with *S'rī*) is employed here to show that, for the offering of the *havis* of the self, the intended recipients, are both the Lord and His Spouse. They are (the two) to whom we are *s'eshas* and consequently (the two) to whom our service is due. Primarily they are (therefore) the objects of attainment. This idea is implicit also in the following and other passages :— "Bhagavan, the[99] Lord of the world, is in the glorious world called Vaikunta with Lakshmi"; "Bhagavan who[100] is seated on the serpent *Ādis'esha* with his Spouse" "The[101] Lord is seated with Lakshmi who is (in every way) suited to Him." "At the[102] sight of Thee and Thy consort with her shining bracelets standing together (as the Rulers of the world)" "Lakshmi[103] whose beauty fascinates even Thee", *etc.* Though the word Sri used here has several meanings as stated in the following *s'lokas* :— "She *dispels*[104] *all blemishes; generates good qualities* in those who are in the world ; *is attained* by all at all times and *has herself attained* the Supreme Object of attainment (Bhagavan)" and "The Lord's Spouse who[105] *has attained* the Lord and *is attained* by others and who *dispels all blemishes* and *listens* to the cry of the distressed"— (though the word has all these meanings) yet, here, it denotes the person who is entitled to (our) service as it is derived from the verbal root *S'rī* which means 'Service'.

*THE MEANING OF NĀRĀYAṆĀYA :—*

Though the word *S'rīmate* by itself denotes Bhagavan and His Spouse who are entitled to our service, yet the word *Nārāyaṇa* is employed here to indicate the full and perfect enjoyment (*anu-*

99. Lainga puranam:
100. Alavandar : Stotram: 39.
101. Sri Ramanuja: Vaikunta gadya.
102. Tiruvoymozhi: 4-9-10.
103. Tiruvoymozhi: 6-9-3.
104. Ahirbudhnya samhita.
105. Ahirbudhnya Samhita.

*bhava*) of the association of a *s'esha* to the *s'eshī*, and of His qualities and glories (*vibhūtis*); for this enjoyment (alone) will generate the kind of love which is essential for all forms of service. Here the dative (or fourth case) which means *for Nārāyaṇa* (existing for Him) refers thereby to service, 'Existing for Him' is in itself an eternal fact (and need not be prayed for). Therefore what is to be prayed for here is service (to Them) preceded by full and perfect enjoyment as stated in the following *s'lokas* and elsewhere :— "Hereafter[106] I should bear in mind the fact of my being His *s'esha* and render service to Him : This is the meaning of *namas*." "Whether you[107] are awake or asleep, I (Lakshmana) will perform all kinds of service to You".

Since the *jīva* while performing *s'araṇagati* (with this *mantra*) is praying to the Saviour for what he desires, a word like *bhaveyam* (may I be) has to be supplied : *S'rīmate Nārāyaṇāya bhaveyam* (May I be for Narayana!) Thus, at first, the attainment of the desired end (service to the Lord) is prayed for as being the more important; thereafter, by the word *namas*, the removal of all hindrances (to salvation and to service) is prayed for.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :—*

Giving up the idea of his salvation by himself or by others as impossible and giving up the idea of his existing either for himself or for others by the thought that he exists (only) for the Lord and having become free from all sins by his aversion to all other objects of enjoyment (than the Lord), the *prapanna* enjoys all his bliss as something which is accessory to the Lord's enjoyment.

*THE MEANING OF THE WORD NAMAS :—*

Here, after the word *namas*, the verb has to be supplied so that it becomes *na mama syām*, which means, "Let me not be for myself." Or it may be looked upon as *na mama kinchit syāt*

106. Bhattar · *Nityam.*
107. Ramayana: Ayodhya kanda 31 - 27.

meaning, 'Let there be (in me) no notion at all of the sense of 'mine' (*mamakāra*)', which would be a prayer for the removal of all hindrances or undesirable things, as it asks for the disappearance of the notion of 'mine' in regard to all objects. The objections raised and the answers given thereto in regard to the attainment of the desired end and the disappearance of all undesirable elements in the case of *Tirumantra* should be borne in mind here (also).

Though this word *namas* prays for the removal of all such hindrances as *avidyā* (ignorance), *karma*, the impressions and inclinations which have resulted therefrom (*vāsanas*), the *ruchi* or tastes and the association with *prakriti* or matter, yet it is considered (by some *āchāryas*) that, in accordance with the *sruti** which gives the etymological interpretation of this word (*namas*), the purport or aim here (in the second part of *Dvaya*) is the removal, in the state of attaining full and perfect service in *mukti*, of the weeds of one's being the doer by one's own will and of one's being the doer for one's own purposes and, likewise, of one's being the enjoyer by one's own will and of being the enjoyer solely for oneself. This weed or wrong notion is likely to arise because, in regard to the enjoyment of the fruit elsewhere (in *svarga*), the thought is present that the fruit was won by one by one's own actions and is enjoyed by one for oneself. From this it would follow that the (man performing *prapatti*) understands that, in regard to the service in the state of *mukti*, there are no such wrong notions as one's being the doer and the enjoyer by one's own will and for the sake of oneself—notions which are present in the state of enjoyment of other fruits (like those in *svarga*). Having understood this, the man performing *prapatti* makes his prayer in conformity with this knowledge.

Arulalapperumalemperumanar commented on the word *namas* occurring here by the following *sloka* :— "The wise say

(* NOTE :— The *Sruti* says: Whatever actions may appear mine are the Lord's, not mine, They do not belong to me; they are the Lord's; I exist for the Lord and not for myself *na mama* ( not mine; not for me ) )

that *namas* means the state of being carefree without expecting any help (of being without any responsibility in regard to oneself) *nairapekshyam* which results from the *jīva's* surrendering all his burdens to the Supreme Being." The *nairapekshyam* referred to in that *s'loka* is being carefree or having no expectation or requirements without the sense of responsibility in regard to one's salvation. From this freedom from responsibility, we should realise that either *bharasamarpaṇam* is suggested here, (since there cannot be the state of being carefree without it) or that the surrender of the *bhara* to the extent of one's being carefree is intended. If we take the latter part of *Dvaya* to be "*Aham S'rīmate, Nārāyaṇāya*" - (I am for Sriman Narayana) and consider it to be the offering of the self along with the *bhara* or burden of protection, and that thereafter *na mama* declares one's having no connection with oneself, as, when an offering is made (to the gods), it is said "This is for Indra and not for me", if we take it in this form, it will be extremely appropriate for this interpretation of the whole of *Dvaya* being a statement of *bhara-samarpaṇa*. In this interpretation the first part of *Dvaya* is about the five *angas* or accessories, while the second part states the *angī*, which is *prapatti*. When the offering or surrender is made saying: "I am for Narayana" as in the *s'loka* "I who [108]realise that I am Thy *s'esha* surrender myself here and now at Thy two lotus feet". — (when this surrender is made), it would imply that the responsibility of one's protection and the fruit arising from one's protection are Narayana's as stated in the following passages: "When the[109] question arises to whom the surrender of the self is made for the sake of salvation or protection, the answer is given "To Vishnu", and "I am Thy [110]responsibility *(bhara)* (in regard to protection)". This *namas* discloses the severance of all connection between a man and his self and what belongs to him and also between himself and his protection and the fruit resulting from it.

108. Alavandar: Stotram: 52
109. Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 52-(35-36)
110. Alavandar: Stotram: 60

The (fourth or) dative case of Narayana and the word *namas* have, each, its significance, in as much as they indicate respectively the declaration of one's connexion with the Supreme Being and the denial of one's connection with oneself. It may also be that *namas* denies such things as one's being a doer not subject to (the will of) the Supreme Being. Even if we take the simple and ordinary meaning of *namas* as *namāmi* (I bow to Narayana," it would be in keeping with the meaning "I surrender" as the word *namāmi* (I bow) has been commented upon in *Mantrarājapada-stotra* as meaning 'for the surrender of the self'.

Thus in the case of those who consider on the latter part of *Dvaya* as indicating the surrender of the self, the special kind of fruit or end (namely *kainkarya*) arises of itself (without the need for stating it), as it is in conformity with the surrender of the self and consistent with one's essential nature (*svarūpa*). In the case of those who interpret on the latter part as indicating the fruit or object of attainment (namely, *kainkarya*) as explained before, the idea of the surrender of the responsibility for protection should be considered as being present in the first part which treats of the *upāya* in the verb (*prapadye*) being taken along with the word *s'araṇam* (*upāya*).

### *THE PURPORT OF DVAYA :—*

Thus, in *Dvaya*, in the different words, by the nature of the words actually used and of the meaning which is implicit (without being actually stated in words), the following principal points as well as what is required for them stand revealed :— (Iswara's) association with the mediator (Lakshmi), this (association) being eternal, Sri being included in the *upāya* along (with Bhagavan), the Saviour being full and perfect in His qualities, the particular form of relationship between the *jīva* and Iswara (that of being the body and the soul respectively and that of being *s'esha* and *s'eshī*), Iswara having a divine and auspicious form, the *s'esha* making his approach to the Lord, in this divine form, how (the

divine and auspicious form of the Lord) becomes the *upāya*; the manner of winning the Lord's grace, its accessories, the *adhikārī* competent for adopting the *upāya*; how the end to be attained is the Lord with His attribute *S'rī*, how the object of attainment (the Lord) is endowed with qualities and *vibhūtis* (glories), how the Lord and Sri are the recipients entitled to (our) service, the prayer for performing this service, the attainment of all forms of service, the removal of all that is undesirable, their utter and complete removal, the *jīva's* being the doer subject to the will of the Supreme Being and for His purposes, the *jīva's* being the enjoyer (in *moksha*) subject to the Lord's will and by way of his enjoyment being accessory to the Lord's enjoyment. And these are recalled in *Dvaya* along with two principal things which are intended to be stated, namely, (1) the *upāya* which is *siddha* (*viz.* the Lord with Sri), the *upāya* which is *sādhnya* (*viz. prapatti*) and (2) the object of attainment which is *siddha* (namely, the Lord with *S'rī*) and the object of attainment which is *sādhya* (namely *kainkarya* or service).

Thus in this gem of a *mantra* (*Dvaya*), the Supreme Reality (the Lord of Sri), the special *upāya* (for attaining it), (namely *prapatti*) and the desired end or fruit (namely-enjoyment and *kainkarya*) are taught as in the *Sārīraka s'āstra* (*Brahma Sūtras*) (*i e.* in the order in which they are treated there). In *Dvaya* the order of words follows the order in which the *upāya* and its fruit occur (*i e.*) the *upāya* is stated first and the fruit is stated thereafter (as the former produces the latter). However, as in the *mantra* (taught) in the *S'vetās'vatara* (*upanishad*) *viz.* "Desirous of *moksha* I seek Thy protection)," the important point is the adoption of the *upāya* preceded by a desire for the fruit (aimed at); former (*āchāryas*) have explained that, following the logical (or psychological order), the sentence stating the fruit (namely, enjoyment and *kainkarya*) should be thought of first. For is it not a fact that a man would never study the nature of an *upāya* and adopt it without previously studying the nature of the end to be attained thereby?. So also in the *Tirumantra*, the order of

meditation should be as stated above in regard to the *upāya*, and the fruit thereof. It is only if he desires the fruit and is (also) competent, that the adoption of the *upāya* would follow.

The words of learned men such as "One should seek (the Lord's) protection with (the utterance) of *Dvaya*" and "The *s'araṇāgati* which is stated in *Dvaya* consists in the faith that to attain Narayana with *S'rī*, His two lotus feet are the *upāya*" — (these words) also show that *Dvaya* reveals the adoption of the *upāya*.

### *THE SUMMARY OF THE MEANING OF DVAYA :—*

Although here (in *Dvaya*), the first part, the words ending with the dative (or fourth) case and the *namas* — (although) these three are three separate sentences, yet it should be construed as a single sentence with the *upāya* as the primary purpose. This is how (it should be construed):—

The sum and substance of *Dvaya* is this:— "At the feet of Narayana who is the Lord of all, who is, in everyway and supremely blissful (or enjoyable) and who is inseparable from Lakshmi and in order that I may obtain the removal of all that is opposed to all kinds of service in all places, at all times and in all states or circumstances and to receive (the privilege of) full and perfect service to Them, I, who am destitute of *upāyas*, surrender the responsibility of the protection of myself with the accompaniment of the five *angas* or accessories at the feet of Narayana, so that I may not have anything to do for such things as the responsibility for protecting myself.

### *SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

1. This has been taught by *āchāryas* who had full control over their minds as a result of their indifference to worldly objects,

who had won over the Lord by (*their*) *prapatti* and who were overpowered solely by their compassion (to teach it to others).

2. This (*mantra*) is understood as consisting of eight words (if *S'rīman Nārāyaṇa charanau* should be taken as three separate words;) of six words (if that compound word is taken as a single word); and as a single sentence with five words where the predicate is important.

(NOTE: With five words: (1) *Prapadye;* (2) *saranam:* (3) *Sriman Narayana charanau* (4) *Srimate* Narayanaya; (5) *namah* according to *Saras vadini.)*

3. This unique *mantra* (or this *mantra* consisting of a single sentence) called *Dvaya* has *three* members (sentences); it can help secure the *fourth* end of life .(namely - *moksha*); it gives a clear idea of the *five* things that ought to be known; it explains the *upāya* with *six angas (prapatti)*; its potency or greatness is similar to that of the *seven* oceans; it explains the meaning of *ashtākshara*, the *mantra* with *eight* letters, and it produces here (in this world?) in Sriranga, in the minds of wise men* (Like Sri Ramanuja) the ninth *rasa*, namely, (*Santa* or spiritual serenity).

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

We have thus explained how, by uttering, in combination, the two parts of *Dvaya* which are read separately in the *s'ruti*, one can seek, as refuge or *upāya*, the two feet of the Lord of Sri who, out of compassion, is bent on helping us and who is prepared to pardon us; one can thus attain the Lord of the lotus-born Lakshmi and in the region of bliss attain faultless service (to the Lord) along with the full and perfect enjoyment of the Lord.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA:*

There is no *s'āstra* superior to Vedanta; there is no higher Truth or Reality than the slayer of Madhu (Narayana); there is

NOTE *: There is a reference here to Sri Ramanuja's *gadya*.

nothing more holy of resort than His devotees; there is no better dwelling place than those places that are agreeable to them; there is no better means of preserving health than the quality of *sattva* (or eating *sātvic* food); there is no other way of acquiring wisdom than devotion to the wise; there is no bliss greater than *moksha*; similarly there is no better means of obtaining spiritual welfare *(moksha)* than the utterance of *Dvaya*.

# THE CHAPTER ON THE CHARAMA SLOKA.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :—*

(1) Sri Krishna, who stands close to the Upanishads and from whom, as from the boundless ocean of mercy, came of its own accord, the *s'loka* (*Charama s'loka*) which puts an end to the sorrows of all men, — by seeking Him as our refuge in *accordance with the injunction (contained in that *s'loka*), and as the eternal *dharma* (*Siddhopāya*), we feel happy with our sins extinguished and free from (all) doubts and fears.

*NOTE :— or by good luck (*vidhina*).

(2) Many are the paths prescribed (in the *s'rutis*) (*Karma yoga*, *Jnana yogā* and *Bhakti yoga*), they are hard to understand and impossible of adoption owing to the restrictions and observances enjoined for them; the fruit to be attained by pursuing them is at too great a distance and (above all) they are unsuitable for simple folk (destitute of intelligence and ability) — to us who feel anxious on these accounts, (He who is) the easy highway, the charioteer and the guide of all men, has, by His grace, enjoined certain victuals (the *charama s'loka*) for the journey in order to lead us to His own feet without any hindrances.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

In order to afford salvation to all the beings created with one mind by Himself and Lakshmi of shining bracelets, He became the son of Vasudeva so that the beautiful city of Dwaraka might prosper. He was then pleased to be the charioteer of the princes (the Pandavas) and He has become for us the unique *dharma* (*Siddhopāya*) which He, with Tulasi flowers adorning His chest, has Himself declared to us and puts a stop to the game of blind-man's buff which stood in the way of our seeing, enjoying and bearing His feet (in Vaikunta) on our head.

## INTRODUCTION TO *CHARAMA S'LOKA* :—

"This[1] Narayana, the Lord of *S'rī*, who abides (for ever) in the ocean of milk has left His serpent-bed and arrived at the city of Madhura." As stated in this *s'loka*, the Supreme Ruler, the Lord of *S'rī*, incarnated in the beautiful city of Dwaraka in order to protect the good, to destroy the wicked and to establish *dharma* on a firm footing; He became easily accessible to every one, and assumed the *role* of a messenger to the Pandavas who had sought His protection, as stated in the passage: "On being[2] thus advised, the sons of Pritha and the twins made *namaskārams* to Janardana, O best of men, along with Draupadi." He made Arjuna the warrior in the chariot and acted as his charioteer to do his bidding. This Arjuna realised that the Lord of all had determined to slay his enemies using him as a (mere) instrument, and that the destruction of his kinsmen was certain He became troubled in mind by inopportune affection and inopportune campassion and by the fear that the slaying of his *āchāryas* and others, though they appeared (against him) in war-like trim, was a sin. So he wanted to know what was the proper thing for him to do and begged (Sri Krishna) saying, "Be[3] pleased to tell me what, you feel sure, is to my lasting benefit I am your disciple and have sought your protection. Therefore advise me as to what I should do". In order to dispel his grief, the Lord explained to him the eternal and essential nature of the soul or self (*ātman*) which is different from the body and the like (the senses *etc*) and likewise *karma yoga* and *jnāna yoga*, which are, to the man who understands this essential nature, the mediate means for attaining the supreme goal and also *bhakti yoga* which has been enjoined as the primary and direct means of attaining it, as also all its accessories. Though Arjuna was eagar to attain this supreme end quickly, he thought it too hard to perform it (*bhakti-yoga*) with all its accessories and though he had the knowledge and the ability needed for its adoption, he realised that the nature of this *upāya* was such that it would secure

1. Harivamsa: 113 - 62.
2. Mahabharata: Aranyaparva - 192 - 56.
3. Bhagavad Gita: 2 - 7.

the end in view only after a very long period of adoption and after unceasing attention and that the end in view could not be attained quickly. So Arjuna became overwhelmed with despair. Under the guise of teaching Arjuna, the *Āchārya* of the *Gītopanishad* is graciously pleased, out of His infinite compassion, to explain this most secret *upāya (viz. prapatti)* in the *charama s'loka* which is the conclusion of the teaching and which leaves nothing unsaid. *Prapatti* which is one of the *upāyas* that he enjoined as optional in the *s'loka*: "I can be attained by those who desire to serve me only by *bhakti* or by *prapatti*. There is no other way of attaining me", is the means alike, of attaining His feet and all other things that are desired, for it has been said, "Only so long as [4]*prapatti* which extinguishes all sins is not performed, only so long will there be suffering, etc." It can be performed without any accessories other than the determination to do what is agreeable to the Lord and the avoidance of what is adverse to Him and the like. It is easier of performance and can be done in just an instant. Since the Supreme Lord, who is the Saviour, has Himself taught this truth which is well known from the *s'rutis*, it has also the sanction of the *āchārya* (for Bhagavan is Himself the *āchārya* here). The permission of the *āchārya* is prescribed in such treatises as *Vishnu-tattva* as follows:— "Giving [5]up all object of desire and the *karmas* by which they can be secured, *S'aranāgati* with its five *angas* (the *angas* and the *angī* being six) should be performed *with the permission of the āchārya* in accordance with the rules prescribed in the *s'āstras* and with renunciation of the fruits of all actions."

### *SARVA DHARMĀN ETC.*

We have refuted, at considerable length, in *Tātparya chandrikā* and *Nikshepa-rakshā*, the interpretations given of this *s'loka* by such perverse (commentators) as Sankara. Here we will state the best and most appropriate meanings as established in the tradition of wise men. The first half of this *(s'loka)* enjoins the

4. Vishnupurana: 1-9-73. 5. Sri Vishnutattvam.

*upāya*, the second half is the *s'esha* which is subordinate or supplementary to it by way of indication of the end to be attained (by that *upāya*). Therefore the main purport of this *s'loka* is to prescribe the *upaya*. *Dharma* is a means of attaining an object which can be understood solely from the *s'āstra*. The use of the plural form, *dharmān*, indicates the manifold nature of the *dharmas* enjoined in the *s'āstra* as the means of attaining the desired objects or ends. The word *sarva* (all) suggests that (these *dharmas*) have certain accessories or *angas*. There is certainly no impropriety in calling the accessories to *dharma* by the word *dharma*. If (on the other hand) we interpret the word *sarva* (all) as the opposite of 'one', it would indicate the manifoldness of the *angīs* (the *dharmas* themselves).

Though the word *dharma* is used without any qualification or restriction, yet what is intended (by the word) here is the various kinds of *upāsana*, or meditation prescribed for the attainment of *moksha* in the *s'āstras* with all their accessories (such kinds of meditation as *dahara vidyā*, *sad vidyā* and *S'āndilya vidyā*). The knowledge of Purushottama (which is praised highly in the *Gītā* (Chap. XI) is conclusively shown in (Sri Ramanuja's) *Gītā Bhāshya* and elsewhere as leading merely to the knowledge of the Truth or Reality which is of help to all *vidyās* or forms of meditation; the knowledge of the truth concerning the *avatārs* (of Bhagavan) is shown in Ch. IV there as the cause of the adopted *upāsanas* yielding their fruit quickly; residence in places where there are temples of Narayana and the like are also shown to make the *upāsanas* effective by the removal or extinction of those sins which stand in the way of the *upāsanas* bearing fruit. Therefore it is not proper to consider them as direct and primary means of attaining *moksha* and to state that the plural form of *dharma*, *viz*, *dharmān* is used to include these also, (for they are only mediate causes of *moksha* and not direct causes like the *upāsanās*) This plural form *dharmān* is significant in as much as it refers to such different and many *vidyās*, as *S'āndilya vidyā* and *dahara vidyā* even without the three mentioned above ((*viz*) the knowledge of Purushottama and

of the *avatārs* and residence in holy places), for it has been said "The [6]*vidyās* are many, as their names and the like are different;" there is no impropriety even if we take the plural to signify the manifoldness of the *angī's* (forms of meditation) and of the *angas* or their accessories.

*THE MEANING OF PARITYAJYA (HAVING GIVEN UP):—*

In the word *parityajya*, the 'giving up' or abandonment consists in the aversion to other kinds of *upāya* (than *prapatti*), which arises from a consideration of one's being destitute of the competency for them, for it has been said, "By this [7]*prapatti* and with only *ākinchanya* or one's being without other *upāyas* as a prerequisite *etc*)". If there is connexion due to desire, the giving up of that desire is certainly *tyāga* or renunciation.

The preposition *pari* (before *tyaj*) is to show the *extreme* aversion arising from the lack of competence (for other *upāyas*) at all times and in every form, which the person destitute of *upāyas* has come to realise in himself as expressed in the following passages, "I see [8]no means of crossing (the sea of *samsāra*) in all the eternity of time which lies before me," and "It is [9]only by the lotus feet of the Lord that I shall attain the desired goal. I have no other means of attaining spiritual welfare in any of my births."

"Aversion in every form" means being without the improper desire to perform what is impossible for a man with the thought: "Though I cannot adopt the *upāya* in full perfection, I will do it to the best of my ability; when that also is too difficult to perform, I will adopt, in the place of the prescribed *angas*, something less difficult or the *upāyas* which will produce the prescribed *upāyas*".

6. Brahma Sutras 3-3-56.
7. ?
8. Sriranga Gadya
9. Jitanta: 1 - 10.

The object of this *anuvāda** (statement of what has already occurred) namely *sarva dharmān parityajya* (which is not a *vidhi* or injunction) is to indicate the person who is specially competent to adopt *prapatti*. The preposition *pari* in *parityajya* is to indicate the person who is most competent or has full competency. In the sentence:— "Having[10] reached this world which is perishable and without pleasure, you should resort to me with devotion," *having reached* does not state a *vidhi* or injunction meaning - "Reach this world". It only means 'Being in this world' or 'since you are in this world'. So also, here, the words *sarvadharmān parityajya* do not mean 'give up all *dharmas*'. It should be taken to mean: "You that have given up all *dharmas*". Since this usage of 'having done a thing' (past participle) is met with in other senses also, it is not right to say that 'having given up all *dharmas*' or giving up all *dharmas* is one of the accessories enjoined for *prapatti*.

If *parityajya* (having given up) is to be considered (at all) as enjoining what should be done (*vidhi*), there is nothing wrong in stating that it *enjoins*, as in the chapters on *Prapatti* and elsewhere, the thought of helplessness (*kārpaṇya*) which is of the nature of such thoughts as being destitute of *upāyas*. In that interpretation, *sarva dharmān parityajya* would mean "Reflect at first on the state in which you are unfit for the adoption or performance of every form of *dharma*" (in this case it would be a *vidhi*). This state has been (well) expressed in such passages as the following:— "I am the[7] abode of all offences (against Thee) and I have no means of saving myself nor have I anything else to attain than Thee", and "I have[8] not performed *dharma* with any constancy; I have not realised the nature of the self nor have I *bhakti* or devotion to Thy lotus feet". Even this interpretation, which is not the meaning that strikes one immediately and is

*NOTE: What is meant is not that the person *should* give up but that as he is unable to adopt other *dharmas*, he should seek the Lord as an *upaya*.

10. Bhagavad Gita 9-33.
8. Alavandar: Stotram: 22.
7. Ahirbudhnyasamhita: 37 - 30.

therefore a little strained, is better than the meanings given by Sankara and others that what is intended here is such as the giving up of the *dharmas* themselves in their essential nature (*svarūpa*), because it is not out of keeping with any *pramāṇas* (for in the chapters on *prapatti*, it is enjoined that the rites and observances of castes and *ās'ramas* should (always) be performed).

When we take *partyajya* as a *vidhi* or injunction, it would be appropriate to say that the meaning of *sarva dharmān parityajya* is :— " No *dharma* of any kind need be performed for the sake of *prapatti* ", in the sense that *prapatti* does not require any of them (as *angas*). In that case, the use of the preposition *pari* would suggest that even such observances as are stated in " This should be done after performing *āchamana* " and " This should be done with bodily purity ", which are requisite for securing fitness for all rites in common, are not to be accepted as *angas* for *prapatti*.

Notwithstanding this, if it is maintained that the giving up of such *dharmas* as *karma yoga*, *jnāna yoga* and *bhakti yoga* in their essential form (*svarūpa*) is an *anga* or accessory to *prapatti*, it would follow that *prapatti* is not in the competence of any one. The abandonment of a *dharma* can be enjoined only in the case of a person who is capable of performing it. This would be opposed to the thought of helplessness ( *kārpaṇya* ), which is called an *anga* ( of *prapatti* ) according to many *pramāṇas*. It would also be opposed to the tradition that *prapatti* is for those who are destitute of *upāyas*, which is evident from such passages as the following :— " I am without[9] any *upāyas* and have no other saviour ". " I was[10] not born into any of the four castes so as to be competent for the performance of *dharma* ". " I have given[11] up the rites to be performed by a Brahmin who has the mark of worshipping the three fires after ablution ", and " I am not[12] well established in the

9. Tiruvoymozhi: 6 - 10 - 10.
10. Tirucchandaviruttam: 90.
11. Tirumalai: 25.
12. Alavandar: Stotram: 22.

performance of *dharma*, nor have I realised the nature of my self *etc*.

To state that the *jīva* (*kshetrajna*) is eternally incapable of all other *upāyas*, since he is entirely dependent on and subject to the control of Iswara and (in the same breath) to state that the giving up of these *dharmas* or *upāyas* is enjoined on him is against all *s'āstras* and is opposed also to the very words of these writers and their actual practice. (For how can a man *give up* a *dharma* which he is not capable of performing? How can a man proceed to perform *kainkarya*, if he is incapable of it owing to utter dependence and subjection?). It would, therefore, be extremely ridiculous to hold this view. (If this view were right, then by the same logic, even the *vidhi* contained in *vraja* (seek me *etc*.) would be impossible of performance.

The statement that the *jīvātmā* is eternally incapable of all other *upāyas* would only go to confirm the view that *parityajya* (here, does not enjoin the giving up and) only states what has already occurred *(anuvāda)* (owing to inability), which these writers would not like to accept.

(Further) the use of a single set of words in a single sentence cannot mean both the statement of what has occurred owing to inability in the case of the man who is not capable and the injunction to the man who is capable of performance to give it up (which is another view held by some)

Nor can it be held that the option is given to the same person *(adhikārī)* who is capable of performing *dharma* either to perform the *dharma* or to give it up. This would mean two alternative courses, one of which is difficult and the other light, when there is no difference in the object of attainment. For if the man who is capable of adopting the difficult *upāya* is enjoined to adopt the lighter or easier *upāya* by giving up the performance (of what he is capable of), then no one would ever think of adopting the more difficult *upāya* and since there is no other way in which the

difference in competency could be stated, all the *s'āstras* which enjoin the performance or adoption of the more difficult *upāya* would carry no weight.

It is also extremely inappropriate to say that, in order to stimulate the adoption of the easier *upāya*, the difficult *upāya* is (first) enjoined and then forbidden for performance.

The view that what are not (really) *upāyas* are enjoined as *upāyas* (and are thereafter condemned as unfit for performance)—this view would tend to look upon the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* as deceptive. Even such things as the essential nature of the Saviour (which we learn only from them) could not (then) be known for certain.

It is true that, in the world, among those that are desirous of wealth, some choose cultivation of the soil and other such difficult operations, while others choose lighter professions like dealing in rubies and other gems; but this option is determined by the differences in capacity or competence among the *adhikārīs.*

Kooarathalvan's commentary on the *charama s'loka* :— "You that suffer (from anxiety) because of the impossibility of adoption of other *upāyas*, give up everything that has been declared as the means of attaining me and seek me as (your) refuge (for salvation) —this commentary, too, means only what has been explained (as the meaning so far) and is not, therefore, opposed to it. (In that commentary 'giving up' states only what has occurred before (*anuvāda*) or means only "without doing it as an *anga* required for *prapatti*."

It is true that, in such cases, as *Samāvartana* or the conclusion of the *Prājāpatyavrata*, baths accompanied by certain *vratas* or observances are prescribed and also (as an alternative) baths without any such *vratas* (which are easier). But this option is determined by the condition or the circumstances in which the person is situated. If we do not take it in this light, the enjoining

of the more difficult alternative would be of no use (for no one would adopt it).

There is another (wrong) view that the *adhikārī* competent for *prapatti* is the person who has fullness of knowledge or fullness of faith and that the *adhikārī* for *upāsanā* is the person who lacks this fullness of knowledge or fullness of faith. If this view were accepted, it would follow that such men as Vyasa who taught the *charamas'loka* and the like and who, because of their piety, had fullness of knowledge and fullness of faith should be looked upon as incompetent for *upāsanā*. There is no evidence or *pramāṇa* to prove that when they taught, they had knowledge and faith and having (later) become weak in intelligence and faith adopted *upāsanā*. There is no evidence in the respective accounts of their lives to show that though they were *prapannas* (with *prapatti* as their *upāya*) they practised *upāsanā* also for setting an example to the world. Even if this were admitted to be a fact, the adoption of a *dharma* which is forbidden to a man for the sake of setting an example to the world would be a sin so far as he is concerned and as the observance or adoption of the *dharma* is opposed to the man's competence, it would not be a proper example to set the world right. (Sri Ramanuja) has explained in the *Gītā Bhāshya* that *lokasangraha* consists in a man choosing one of two ways of life (*permitted for himself*) as being easy of performance by others and beneficial to them, and adopting that way of life as an example to others in order to establish them firmly in it. A *sannyāsin* adopting the way of life peculiar to the house-holder and forbidden to himself is not setting an example for the sake of the betterment of the world (*lokasangraha*). This would be only the violation of the commandment (of the Lord). In the same way, the adoption by a *prapanna* of a *dharma* forbidden to him, under the misapprehension that it would be a form of *kainkarya* is also opposed to his competency.

There is nothing wrong in a *prapanna* performing those rites that are prescribed in the *s'āstras* and that are not required for *prapatti* with the idea that they are (forms of) *kainkarya* (service).

If it is maintained that as an *anga* or accessory of *prapatti*, men should give up all *dharmas* (rites and observances) appropriate to their respective castes (and *ās'ramas*) and capable also of being performed by them, it would follow tnat they would lose the fruit *viz.* the *kainkarya* or service appropriate to their respective caste, *ās'rama* and the like, in the period after *prapatti*; (it would also follow) that they should give up also such *dharmas* as non-violence and speaking the truth which are common to all and the showing of reverence to *āchāryas* and roam about like cattle, beasts and birds.

It may be argued that *dharmas* which are of the nature of refraining (from actions) and which are understood from prohibitory texts (such as 'do not kill') are not *activities calculated to protect oneself* and are therefore not opposed to *prapatti* and that, owing to this what is intended here is only the giving up of such activities as are *positive* (*pravritti*) (and not mere abstentions from activity). This argument, too, is unsound. *Nivritti*, abstention or renunciation, is also a form of activity arising from one's will or determination, and it too, may occur for the sake of protecting oneself as may be seen in the world and from the Vedas. (Prohibitory texts in the Vedas presume that even abstentions are activities. Refraining from treasonable activities is often for the sake of protection of one's self from the penal code).

If it be held that, on the strength of the injunction (*vidhi*) contained in (*parityajya*), the *prapanna* should give up all *dharmas* whether they be positive activities (*pravritti*) or abstentions from actions (*nivritti*) and that this is the real intention of the *s'āstras*, then it would follow that the ancients who performed *prapatti* and those who are *prapannas* today have done and are doing what is against the *s'āstras* in performing different kinds of *kainkarya* (*pravritti*) and in performing expiatory rites for offences (committed by them) (for what is forbidden should, on that view, be performed and no expiation would be necessary for it). These men who are propagators of the tradition of *prapatti* in accordance with the *pramāṇas* and who are also supremely

compassionate could, under no stretch of imagination, be thought of as deluded or deceitful.

It may be argued that this objection would stand only if the giving up of all *dharmas* (rites and observances) is enjoined (on the *prapanna*) *for the rest of his life*, and that it would not hold good, if the giving up of all *dharmas* in their essential form (*svarūpa*) is considered as an *anga* (of *prapatti*) to be done only *at the time* of performing *prapatti* and if their resumption is permitted after that performance. The answer to this argument is as follows :— " There is no need at all to enjoin the giving up of an activity or of an abstention which is not likely to be present at all at that time. If only such activities or *dharmas* in their *svarūpa* as are likely or possible at the time are enjoined to be given up, it would follow that *prapatti* should be performed after giving up such things as the following :— residence in holy places sacred to Bhagavan, the tuft of hair, the sacred thread (*yagnopavīta*) and the wearing of the mark of the sect (*pundra*).

Therefore the proper interpretation of the *vidhi* (if it be taken as *vidhi*) enjoining the giving up is this :— "*Prapatti* does not require, as an *anga* or accessory, any *dharma* or observance or rite which is required as an *anga* (such as *karma*) to *upāsana* (meditation) according to *vidyās*".

Even in this view that *parityajya* indicates a *vidhi* or injunction to give up the person competent for *prapatti* is one who is incapable of other *upāyas*, or one who, though capable of other *upāyas*, is too impatient to endure the delay in attaining the fruit (which the other *upāyas* might entail). If we take this view, it will not be against any of the *pramāṇas* (*viz* those which enjoin the rites of the *varṇas* and *ās'ramas*, and those which enjoin *bhakti yoga* and the like). Former *āchāryas* did not discuss the point whether or not the giving up of all *dharmas* in their essential form is an *anga* of *prapatti*. Their discussions were confined only to the question of which words in the *charama s'loka* respectively indicated the qualification necessary for *prapatti viz.* that of being

destitute of other *upāyas* and which words the idea that *prapatti* did not require (any *anga* or accessory).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS* :

Some *āchāryas*, who were conversant with the requirements of a sentence, thought that the *charama s'loka* speaks first (in *parityajya*) of the person competent for *prapatti* (as one who is unable to adopt other *upāyas*) and then declares by the word *ekam* me alone) that *prapatti* as an *upāya* does not require anything else as *anga* or accessory. Others said that the *charama s'loka* speaks first of *prapatti* not requiring anything else as *anga* and then declares who the competent person is for the easier *upāya* in the word *vraja*) by the suggestion contained in the word *s'oka* or grief (in *mā s'uchah*) (for the grief should be the grief due to the man's inability to adopt other *upāyas*). (There was no discussion among these earlier *āchāryas* of the point whether *prapatti* enjoined the giving up of all *dharmas* (even such as those ordained for the *varṇas* and the *ās'ramas*). Thus the discussion was confined only to the way in which the words (in the *s'loka*) should be construed, though there was no difference in the meaning as a whole, and the author of *S'rī Bhāshya* did not stop the discussion. What was (wrongly) imagined as having been the subject of discussion by other people who did not know what had formerly taken place — that was shown to be without any foundation by such teachers as Vishnuchitta.

But it may be asked how the difference between those who are competent and those who are not competent (for *prapatti*) could be justified in the face of such *s'lokas* as the following :— " This is the *upāya* for those[13] who do not understand; this is also the *upāya* for those who know well : this is the *upāya* for those who want to reach (quickly) the shore beyond *samsāra* and this is the *upāya* also for those who want (immediately) to render constant service to the Lord ", and " Hari is[14] the only *upāya* to

13. Lakshmi Tantra : 17 - 100. 14. Bhattar.

those who do not know of other *upāyas*, either with their ignorance or with their knowledge of such qualities of the Lord as His being the Lord (of all), and on account of intensity of *bhakti* ". The answer to this question is as follows :— The *ajnānām* or ignorance referred to in the word (*ajnānāt*) in Lakshmi Tantra and *avidyātah* in Bhattar's *sloka* is not the ignorance of such beings as cattle of what is stated in the *sastras*. It means only this much, lack of a clear understanding of such forms (of adoration) as *upāsanas* or ignorance, even in regard to *prapatti*, of subtle niceties or distinctions in it. The word *vijānatām* in *Lakshmītantram* (to those who know) and *deve paribrudatayā viditayā* (with the knowledge of such qualities of the Lord as His being the Lord of all) refer only to the kind of knowledge which enables one to understand such things as *upāsanas* or the kind of knowledge which enables a man to have a clear understanding of such things as the qualities of the Saviour, which is necessary for *prapatti*. It does not (certainly) mean a knowledge of all things, in general, for only the knowledge of the Saviour's quality of being the Lord of all is referred to here. Even if a man has this knowledge that is essential (for *upāsana*), when he is without the ability to adopt that (*upāsana*), he is one that is destitute of *upāyas* (*akinchana*) and has competency for *prapatti*.

Here another objection might be raised, *viz*., " Even if a man has (the knowledge and) the ability, he should remain without any endeavour on his own part, knowing as he does, the Saviour's nature, for does not Sita say :— " If Sri Rama[15], who can destroy the hosts of his enemies, discharges his arrows on Lanka and takes me away from here, it will be the appropriate thing for him ?". The answer to this is that (Sita's attitude) would be an example of the *prapanna's* later life (not of what he should do or should not do before *prapatti*). If this is not admitted, all *sāstras* which enjoin the adoption of *upāyas* would be meaningless.

15. Ramayana: Sundarakanda : 39 - 30.

Even when a man has both the knowledge of the other *upāya* (*viz. upāsana*) and the ability to adopt it, if he is too impatient to brook delay in the attainment (of the end), he may be competent for performing *prapatti*, if he thinks that only *prapatti* would secure his object *viz.*, (the quick attainment). This (that even the man who has the knowledge and ability to adopt *upāsana* may adopt *prapatti* if he cannot brook delay) is disclosed in the words: "This is the *upāya* for those who want to cross the sea of *saṁsāra*"; 'for those who want to cross', here, means "Those who want to reach the shore beyond *saṁsāra quickly* (i. e) those that desire a *quick* removal of the hindrances that stand in their way. "This is the *upāya* for those who desire *ānantyam*" (the perfect enjoyment of the service of Brahman) which is one's due on account of one's essential nature. Here also the meaning is 'those who desire to have it *quickly*' (*i. e.* those who cannot brook existence without that enjoyment.

Having these two in mind, Bhattar says, "by the intensity of their *bhakti*." Here *bhakti* does not signify *bhakti yoga*, but 'intensity of the love (of the Lord)'. Intensity of *bhakti* or love means a state of mind in which the man would cease to exist if he could not have quick attainment. Though this is not the *bhakti yoga* enjoined for some *adhikārīs*, yet some get that state of mind by the grace of Bhagavan due to righteous acts (in previous births) The man who has this state of mind is also competent for *prapatti*.

Therefore *prapatti* may be adopted by (1) those who do not know of other *upāyas* and who have a knowledge of what *prapatti* is in general (without a knowledge of details and distinctions); (2) those who have a clear understanding of *prapatti* and the other *upāya (upāsana)* but lack the ability to adopt the latter; (3) those who, though they have both the knowledge and the ability, cannot brook delay (in the attainment of the end) and cannot exist without it. This man who cannot brook delay is also destitute of *upāyas* for attaining the end in his view at the time when he wants

it (so he, too, is competent for *prapatti*). It is in consideration of this circumstance that (Bhattar) wrote :— " who know of no other *upāya* in the world ".

Vyasa and others who held administrative offices (under the Lord) could brook delay and were also capable of the other *upāya* (*i. e*) *upāsana*. Therefore it is that they adopted *upāsana* and not because they were wanting in knowledge or in faith. (Those who hold administrative offices must serve their full period before thinking of attainment.)

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

(If it be asked, " Why is it said (in some places) that a man adopts *upāsana* owing to weakness of intelligence?" the answer is as follows) :— ' When a man is incapable of an *upāya* which is extremely difficult of adoption and yet adopts it because of an obstinate desire, the ignoring of the easy *upāya* should be considered as being due to weakness of intellect." Or it is proper also to explain their adoption of the difficult *upāya* as due to their unfitness for *prapatti* (owing to their lack of faith in it and the like.) This is not the explanation in the case of Vyasa and others (adopting *upāsana*), for they remove all the doubts of others (and cannot be considered as wanting in knowledge or faith).

Since in this manner the competency of a man either for *upāsana* or for *prapatti* is determined, both the *s'āstras* (those of *upāsana* and those of *prapatti*) have their own respective purpose.

The difference between the two *adhikārīs* in regard to the rites and observances of their caste and *ās'rama* is only the difference of the *purpose* for which or the thought with which they are performed. It is true that, in the case of the *prapanna*, the performance of any rite or observance will prevent the attainment of his end, because, like the Brahma missile, it would cease to have any effect, if any other rite is performed to attain the same end. But if these rites are performed *for their own sake* (without the desire for any fruit) or for such things as the glory of Bhagavan or

the welfare of Bhagavatas, there is no impropriety (and *prapatti* would not lose its efficacy)

But it may be asked by some :— " Even if it is admitted that the giving up of the *dharmas* themselves is not enjoined, it is possible that *parityajya* (having given up) may mean the giving up of (only) *the thought* that they are *upāyas.* (The answer to this question is as follows:) " In those texts which refer to the activities of the *prapanna* after the performance of *prapatti*, it may be held rightly that what is ordained is the giving up of the *thought* that these activities are *upāyas*. But the *charama-sloka* is a text which enjoins an *upāya* (before *prapatti*) and not what should be done *after* it, and the word *parityajya* occurs there. Therefore this interpretation would result in the injunction that these *dharmas* in their essential form should be performed as *angas* or accessories to *prapatti*, but without the thought that they are *upāyas*. If this view were accepted, then, the view that certain things should be performed after *prapatti* merely for their own sake (without any aim, object or the desire for any fruit) and as mere service (to the Lord) would become untenable. (For they would still be *angas* or accessories and could not be an end in themselves). Nor could there be, in that case, the absence of any requisite or accessory *dharma* which is said to be the unique feature of *prapatti*. Thus this *upāya* would cease to be within the competence of the man destitute of all *upāyas*. This is how it would result. There is no need to enjoin here the giving up of the thought of their being *upāyas* in regard to those *dharmas* that are not *upāyas* So the performance of those *dharmas* which *are upāyas* without the thought that they are *upāyas* would only be the adherence to such *upāyas* as the old *upāsanas*. If it is maintained that the word *parityajya* means the giving up of the thought of their being *upāyas*, then there would have been no need to reconcile the conflicting statements about the ordinance concerning abandonment and that about performance by saying that the difference is due to the persons competent for each of them. It is only if the text is held to enjoin the giving up of the *dharmas*

themselves, there would arise any such conflict. If it is held that the adoption of *karma*, *jnāna* and *bhakti*, but without the *thought* that they are *upāyas* is an *anga* to *prapatti*, there would be no essential difference between the *bhakta* and the *prapanna*. The difference would only be nominal (*i. e*) the man who has *bhakti* as the main and independent means and *prapatti* as an accessory to it could be called a *bhakta* and the man who adopts *prapatti* as the main and independent means and *bhakti* as an accessory to it would be called a *prapanna*, but both would perform the same *dharmas* and there would be no difference in their action.

It may be argued that, in regard to accessory activity, there need not be fullness or perfection of performance and that some short-comings might be allowed therein ; but this argument is not sound. Has it not been stated.— "A rite or observance performed for the attainment of a certain fruit will yield the desired fruit, only when all the accessory rites or *angas* are duly performed?" (*Pūrva Mīmāmsā*).

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS*:—

Thus if it is stated that the *dharmas* themselves in their essential form should be given up, even the rendering of service would become an offence. If it is said that what is to be given up is only the *thought* that they are *upāyas*, then the *dharmas* in their essential form would become an *anga* (of *prapatti*).

It is only those who have forgotten the episodes* of Kakasura and the like that would maintain, as *angas* of *prapatti*, these *dharmas* without the *thought* that they are *upāyas* and that the person is himself the doer of the action and its beneficiary (for the doership and the benefit are God's).

We have (also) heard that, by a single performance alone of *prapatti* far removed from any other *dharma*, the ancients obtained at once what they desired.

---

* NOTE: Kakasura performed *prapatti* (to *Sri* Rama) without any of the rites due to *varna* or *asrama*.

If it is maintained that the *angas* of *bhakti yoga* which might be presumed as necessary also for *prapatti* are declared to be unnecessary for *prapatti* and as being no *angas* to it, the potency of the *upāya (prapatti)*, which is equal in might to the Brahma missile, becomes well established and the rendering of service and the like will also become appropriate

Therefore the view that here (in *parityajya*) the giving up of all *dharmas*, (rites, observances and the like) is enjoined (for *prapatti*) and the view that what is enjoined to be given up is only the *thought* of their being *upāyas* and the thought that they are *angas* to it — these views conflict with such *s'āstras* as ordain the observance of the commandments, with the *s'āstras* which state that *prapatti* does not require anything else, with the traditional observances of former *āchāryas* and with the code of conduct followed by virtuous men in former times who had become *prapannas*. Thus owing to the objections pointed out so far, the giving up of all *dharmas* is not an *anga* to *prapatti*; nor is the performance of these *dharmas* in their essential form an *anga* (without the thought of their being *upāyas* or *angas* to *prapatti*), because as has been stated before, *prapatti* does not require the performance of any other *dharma*. Therefore this injunction or ordinance about 'giving up' (*tyāga*) has, for its purport, the statement that *prapatti* does not require any (aid) from any other *dharma*.

To make this denial, there must be a wrong presumption of something that has to be denied. If it is asked *what dharmas* (rites, observances and the like) are presumed (wrongly) as being requisite and are then stated to be unnecessary (the answer is as follows) — In the *vidyās* or forms of meditation (*upāsanas*) enjoined in Vedanta, some of the accessories which appear as *angas* in certain *vidyās*, such as the rites, duties and observances of the *varṇas* and the *ās'ramas* and also such things as meditation on the route to *moksha* are required also in other *vidyās* or forms of meditation. So also there may, at first, be a (wrong) presump-

tion that in *nyāsavidyā* too, these might be required as accessary. To correct this presumption, here (in *parityajya*), these *dharmas* which might be thought of (wrongly) on the analogy of *upāsanas* as *angas* (to *prapatti*) are not required for it. This is the right interpretation of the text here.

Though these *dharmas* cannot be considered as accessory aids (to *prapatti*) as they are stated to be for *upāsana* in *Brahma Sūtras* (3 - 4 - 33), yet as stated in another *sūtra* (3 - 4 - 32), the *karmas* ordained for the different *ās'ramas* have to be performed, as they are enjoined as ordinances or commands; there is nothing to prevent their performance by the *prapanna* (since commandments have to be obeyed as such (and for no other reason).

*CONCLUSION:—*

Therefore, as neither the performance of these *dharmas* nor their giving up is an *anga* to *prapatti*; to be without the desire to do what is beyond one's ability is a mark of competency (for *prapatti*). The performance of those duties or rites which are *nitya* and *naimittika* and which are within the range of one's ability takes rank as mere service consisting in the observance of a command.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:—*

It is only the thought or the will to do what is pleasing to the Lord that is stated (in the *s'āstras*) as an *anga* of *prapatti*, 'The action arising out of that will or thought is not an *anga*. The rites of the *varṇa* and *ās'rama* are the proper thing to do in virtue of their being the Lord's command and not because it is the consequence of the will or the thought to do what is pleasing to Him.

If so, it may be asked: " What is the purpose or object of performing those manifold and great acts of service which cannot be included among the commands to perform *nitya* and *naimittika*

*karma?*" These cannot be included among any of the other *upāyas* for *moksha* (because they are not performed with the object of attaining *moksha*); nor are they *angas* or accessories to *prapatti*, because it does not require any such *angas* or aids. The person does not perform them because of the fear that the Lord would be offended at their non-performance, nor does he perform them with the desire that they would bring about, by themselves, extinction of his sins or the attainment of such fruits as *svarga*, cattle, children and the like. Neither does he perform them merely for his own delight just like worldly men playing dice and the like, nor does he perform them to please the Lord having seen, like the freed souls, by actual observation, what would be approved of by Him. If so, why does he perform them, it may be asked. (The answer is as follows):— He proceeds to perform them because it is evident from the *s'āstras* that these acts of service have, for their fruit, the propitiation of the Lord (just like other fruits). As one in whose nature the quality of *sattvam* predominates, he acquires a taste for pleasing the Lord and follows the light shed by the lamp of the *s'āstras* in trying to give delight to the Lord who stands in varied relationships to him (as father, mother *etc.*), in the same way as he shows his love to his friends, children and the like.

In this connection some may ask:— "In the case of the wise man who has made a complete surrender of all responsibility to the Lord of all, is not the criterion for deciding what should be given up and what taken up, the knowledge of his own essential nature (*svarūpa*?) So he is bound (only) by the knowledge of his own essential nature (to do or not to do this or that); why, then, should he follow the dictates of the *s'āstras?*". This question is improper, for, if it is determined what his essential nature is with the help of the *s'āstras*, then there is no other guide for him than the *s'āstras*, until the time of his attaining *mukti*, to help him to understand what aims in life he should avoid as also the *upāyas* therefor, and what aims he should have and also the *upāyas* for securing these aims. From the knowledge that he is *s'esha* to the Lord and the

like, it is just possible to know a few things that are appropriate to the *s'esha*. The knowledge of one's essential nature cannot indicate, unequivocally, in what manner service should be rendered in order that it may please the *s'eshī*, and what *upāyas* should be adopted for this service. This being so, if one ignores the *s'āstras* and renders service with forbidden substances (like opium, say) or even among substances that are permitted, to render service with substances acquired unjustly and thus render service according to one's own sweet will and pleasure in ways opposed to what is enjoined in the *s'āstras*, then there would be no difference between reverential conduct and offence. Then since there is no criterion besides one's own's own taste, one might think of performing as service all that is considered as forbidden and therefore avoided by seekers after *mukti*. The author of *Ṣrī Bhāshya* has stated (in regard to the offering of food *(havis)* to *Archā*):— "Having [14]collected those things which are not prohibited in the *s'āstras* etc." Therefore the proper thing is to render such forms of service as are enjoined in the *s'āstras* as competent to the person concerned and subject to the dictates of the *s'āstras* The teaching contained in the *s'loka* :— "To know[15] what ought to be done and what ought not to be done, the only authority that you have is the *s'āstra*. Therefore while you are here, understand the *karma* enjoined in the *s'āstra* just as it is" — this teaching is common to all (whatever their competency). Sri Alavandar in his *Gītārthasangraha* says:— "Among these *ekāntins* (who are devoted exclusively to the Lord), the wise man *(jnānī)* is called *paramaikāntī*, one who has supreme devotion to the Lord to the exclusion of all other interests. His being alive is solely dependent on the Lord. To be united with Him is his (only) delight; to part from Him is his (only) pain. His mind is always with the Lord. He considers himself as an entity only because of his meditating on Him, of visiting holy places (sacred to Him), and of speaking of Him to others, of bowing to Him and uttering his sacred names. His

14. Sri Ramanuja; Nitya.

15. Bhagavad Gita: 16-24

actions are performed with his life-breath, mind, will and the senses all dedicated to Him. He performs all the duties pertaining to him and also practises *bhakti* inspired solely by love. He should give up the idea of their being *upāyas* and place the *upāya* in the Lord without any fear". In these *s'lokas* what Alavandar meant by the words "inspired solely by love" was not that he should ignore the *s'āstras*. His idea was to emphasise the great inspiration arising from his love (of the Lord), whose *s'esha* he is, to perform those acts of service which he can understand only from the *s'āstras*, in order to give delight to Him. When these *s'lokas* are considered in relation to the man who practises *upāsanas* and the like, its aim is to show that these *upāsanas* are most pleasing to the person himself, that they are not the direct means of attaining the supreme end, but are the means of winning the favour of the Saviour who is the direct means or *upāya* for obtaining this end, and that the Lord of all who is pleased by these *upāsanas* stands as the direct *upāya* for the attainment of this end. When the *s'lokas* are considered in relation to the man who has adopted *prapatti* as the principal and independent means, their aim is to show that, though he performs the ordinances of *nitya* and *naimittika karma* and such other rites just as they are enjoined for *bhakti yogd*, since he does not perform them for the sake of other objects like *svarga* and *moksha* and performs them solely for pleasing the Lord, he has not adopted any other *upāya* (for *moksha*) and has no other interests or object. (Their aim is also) to show that, as he is destitute of other *upāyas*, the Lord Himself stands in the place of those *upāyas* and rewards him with the desired fruit.

Those who have not studied Vedanta might ask (in this connection·—' Both these *adhikārīs* (the *bhakta* and the *prapanna*) are devoted solely and exclusively to the Lord as stated (in the *s'lokas* ):— " Wise men do[16] not worship Brahma, Rudra and other gods, for the reward that can be given by them is limited." " They

16. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 350-36

are [17]my devotees who have no devotion to other deities, who love those that are devoted to me and who seek me alone as their *upāya*" and "He [18]who has attained the lotus feet of Vishnu should not worship other deities." If these two *adhikārīs* should perform the rites and observances of their castes and *ās'ramas* as stated (in Alavandar's *s'lokas*) (*viz.*, all the *karmas* pertaining to them and also *bhakti*), would not their supreme and exclusive devotion to the Lord be adversely affected in as much as these rites or *dharmas* are mixed up with (the worship of) such gods as Agni and Indra?" Here, as explained in the *Brahma Sūtras* (1—2—29), names like Agni may be considered, on the authority of Jaimini, as directly referring to Brahman or Bhagavan, for Agni and other such words may be etymologically derived as *agram nayati*. (He who receives the best part of the offering for Himself) *etc.* There is no worship or contact with other deities, because they are like the sacred names found in *Sahasranāma* (etymologically applicable to Bhagavan). The author of *S'rī Bhāshya* has stated in his *Nitya*:— "Having pleased the gods, the *rishis* and the Manes with oblations and with the thought *that they have Bhagavān as their inner self*" etc. So it is perfectly in accordance with the *s'āstras* to perform these respective rites meditating that the Supreme Being has the respective deities as His body. In [19]*Pratardana vidyā* and the like we are taught in the *s'āstras* that the Supreme Being may be meditated on (or worshipped) in three forms: (one) in His own divine and essential nature, (two), the Supreme Being as having sentient beings as His attribute (or body), and (three) the Supreme Being as having non-sentient things as His attribute (or body). Though He is worshipped in these three ways, the worship is really to the Supreme Being and not to His attributes (or bodies) (namely - the sentient and non-sentient beings). In the same way here also, the *bhakta* or *prapanna* does not adore the gods, the *rishis* and the Manes, who are really attributes or bodies of the Supreme Being.

---

17. Mahabharata: Aswamedhikaparva: 104-91

18. :?

19. Brahma Sutras 1-1-32.

As stated in the following *s'lokas* :— "In all[20] *yajnas*, it is I that am worshipped and it is also I myself that rewards (those who perform them) with the fruits thereof," "It is Thou[21] alone that assumest the forms of the *Pitris* and the gods and receivest the offerings *(havis)* (made to the gods) and the offerings *(kavya)* made to the Manes in *s'rāddhas*" and "Those who[22] propitiate the Pitris, the gods, the Brahmins and Agni—they propitiate only Vishnu who is the inner self of all things"—as stated in these *s'lokas*, it is only the Supreme Being, who is the inner self of all, that is the object of adoration to the wise man. Therefore to the man who performs *kainkarya* or service according to the *s'āstras* with this knowledge, there is no association with other *upāyas*; there is no association for him with other objects or purposes in acquiring the necessary substances for worship and in eating the food offered (to these gods). Similarly there is no association for him with other deities when, obeying the injunctions (contained in the *s'āstras*), he worships the Supreme Being having, for His attributes, sentient beings and non-sentient things. It has been said, "He who[23] worships as the Supreme Being any deity other than Narayana who dwells in his heart, who controls him and is his Lord and Master—he is a sinner," "He who considers[24] Narayana as being (only) equal to other deities — he will stay in hell as long as the sun and the moon last", and "One should not[25] go near the places where Buddha, Rudra and the like are worshipped and so also near the cremation ground, near a corpse, near a forest and near the capital city of a kingdom." As stated (in these *s'lokas*), it would be a sin for a *paramaikāntin* if other deities are looked upon by him as the Supreme Being, if they are considered equal (to Narayana) and if he goes to places where other deities are worshipped, when these deities have nothing to do with his *nitya* and *naimittika* rites and observances. Since these deities stand in the position of bodies to the Supreme Being who is

20. Bhagavad Gita: 9 - 24.
21. Vishnupurana: 1 - 19 73.
22. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 355 - 41.
23. Prajapatyasmriti.
24. ?
25. Sandilya Smriti: 4 - 191.

the inner self of all and who is the object of adoration in these rites and observances (*nitya* and *naimittika*), there is no thought in the mind of the man (with supreme and exclusive devotion to the Lord) of these deities being the Supreme Self, of their being equal to Bhagavan, of their being independent of the Lord, of their being objects of adoration or of their being the dispensers of the fruits of actions. Therefore in the same way as by *Prana*, *Vais'vānara*, and the three worlds which are the attributes of the Supreme Being in the *Vidyās* or meditations called *Vais'vānara vidya* and the like. he is not affected, so also his exclusive devotion to the Lord is not (in the least) affected by such attributes as Agni (which are associated with these rites and observances, *nitya* and *naimittika*).

While proceeding to state the adoration of Bhagavan to be performed by the *prapanna* in the day and the night, Vangipuram Nambi has described the *dharmas* of the castes and the *as'ramas* with their respective *mantras* (in the following passages) :—" (The *prapanna*) should spend his time by performing duly all the rites ordained for the time of the *sandhyā*, after sipping the water *(āchamana)* with the prescribed *māntras ;* after this he should perform the *homa* to the sacrificial fires during the Agnihotra rites with the prescribed *mantras* and with *samit* (fuel), ghee and other such substances. He should do every *karma* at the time prescribed for them in the *s'āstras* ". Then he says: " He should [27]perform, without being lazy, all the rites from the bath to *Brahma yajna* prescribed in the Vedas for his *ās'rama* as fit to be done at noon ". He continues : " Then he should perform the prescribed *Yajna* to the gods and to the *pitris* (Manes), after which he should eat the food offered to Bhagavan (which act is called *anuyāga* )". Bhattar and Koorathalvan, too, in their respective *nityas*, have stated as follows :— " With the vertical [28]mark *(Ūrdhvapundra)* on his forehead, (he) should perform the rites ordained in the *s'rutis*, and

26. Vangipuram Nambi: Nitya: 77 - 84.

27. Vangipuram Nambi: Nitya: 90.

28. Bhattar: Nityam

*smritis* as far as it lies in his power, with the thought that they form the adoration of the Supreme Being and then offer oblations of water (*tarpaṇam*)". Peria Jeer (Nanjeer) begins by performing obeisance with the words: "I seek the feet of Parasara Bhattarya". By this he reminds us of the special tradition concerning the homage to be paid to *gurus* and the like. After this, he says "I will now describe the manner in which service should be rendered to the lotus feet of Bhagavan every day by men with exclusive devotion to him (*Ekāntins*)". He then says "(The *Ekāntin*) should sprinkle water on himself by uttering the *mantra* beginning with *Āpohi* and then sip water (*āchamana*) with the utterance of the *māntras* which denote Bhagavan; after this he should offer *arghya* to the Supreme Being who is in the sphere of the sun and then perform *japa*, meditating on Bhagavan with the *mantra* of *Gāyatrī*. After the *japa*, he should offer praise to Purushottama. Oblations of water (*tarpaṇa*) should then be made to the gods, the *rishis* and the *pitris* (Manes), who have Narayana as their inner self." We see also that, in all families which follow the tradition of the author of Sri *Bhashya*, until the present day, weddings and *upaṇayanas* (initiation with the sacred thread) have been performed in accordance with their respective (*Grihya*) *sūtras*, (Apastamba and the like) with the respective *mantras* denoting the respective deities. It is also well-known to all that the great *āchāryas* like Peria Nambi performed *yajnas* (sacrifices) and the like in accordance with their respective *sūtras*. Therefore in the case of those who follow the teaching of the author of *S'rī Bhāshya*, his disciples and their disciples, it is not proper to perform any rites (like those of weddings) with the *mantras* in certain *samhitās** following the doctrines of the Agamas (*Pāncharātra*) which are prescribed specially (to those who follow them).

(*NOTE: Satvatam: Padmam: Jayakhyam, etc. these are the *agama samhitas*.)

We have already shown in Sri *Pāncharātrarakshā* (The Defence of Pancharatra) that the Pancharatra is of four kinds or

systems (*Āgama Siddhānta*, *Mantra Siddhānta*, *Tantra Siddhānta* and *Tantrāntara Siddhānta*) in accordance with the competency and the like (ability) of the person concerned, that the principle holds good that what is not stated in any one of them should be taken from the others, provided there is no conflict or opposition and that, in all the four kinds or systems of *Pāncharātra*, the direct means or *upāya* of attaining *moksha* is set forth and that by every one of them, there is the attainment of *moksha*, just in the same way as to all the four *ās'ramas* there are *Brahma Vidyās (bhakti* and *prapatti)* and that to every one of them there is the possibility of attaining *moksha*. It has also been stated there, at considerable length, that if a person were to perform all *karmas* or rites with any *mantras* of his own liking, ignoring what is enjoined in those *s'āstras* as the proper thing for each kind or system, he should perform expiatory rites *(prāyas'chitta)* and the like. Therefore until the time of attaining *mukti*. there is no authority for rendering service or *kainkarya* (to the Lord) in any manner other than what is ordained in the *s'āstras* as appropriate for each *adhikārī*.

Hence since even the *prapanna* is subject to the authority of the *s'āstras* and should perform only such service as is permitted or enjoined by them, the following (heretical) views which are opposed to the scriptures and the traditional observances (of the good) supported by right reason or logic are not to be accepted by those who desire to stand in *sattvam* - (views such as the following):- (1) Both those commands that are enjoined as positive rites or actions and those that forbid certain activities should be violated; (2) Both those activities and rites that are enjoined and those that are forbidden should be given up. (3) The rites and observances of the *varṇas* and *ās'ramas* are dependent only on the bodies (of Brahmins and the like) and may therefore be given up by the person who has attained a true knowledge of the essential nature of his self (which is different from the body). (4) They may be performed or may not be performed (5) Even if they are given up, no harm will result except the loss of the Lord's pleasure

(6) The only harm that would result in their being given up is the ill-will of society and other such (erroneous) views.

It is true that, as for those in the *ās'rama* of the Sannyasin, to whom certain old rites and observances (of the *grihasthās'rama)* are forbidden and certain new rites and observances enjoined, (so also) for those who are Bhagavatas, as a consequence of their being such, certain things are forbidden and certain new things are enjoined. But no *karma* or rite which has been ordained as compulsory of performance should (on any account) be given up. For it has been stated :— "The man [29] who does not perform the rites pertaining to the *sandhyā* is always impure and is unfit for the performance of any (other) rite. Whatever other rite or *karma* he may perform, he will not obtain the fruit thereof". As in the differences in the manner of performing the *sandhyā* meditation or worship that are found in the *sūtras* and the different *Dharma S'āstras* (Manu, Apastamba and the like) those differences that are found in the different *samhitās* of the Lord's *S'āstra* (*Pāncharātra*) and also such differences in the *sandhyā* meditation as are stated in the Itihasas and the Puranas — these differences should be observed respectively by those who follow these respective *s'āstras*. Conduct like the following which is enjoined in the *s'āstras* and the Ithihasas, namely, "At the time of the [30] *parvas*, one should pray to the deities for protection" and "One should bow in front of places where the gods are worshipped — (conduct like this) is restricted in the case of the man who is supremely and exclusively devoted to Bhagavan (*Paramaikāntin*) owing to the authority of the *s'āstra* (*i,e.* the only deity or God that he should pay homage to is Bhagavan). Therefore no *s'āstra* is violated.

Such injunctions as the following :— "Therefore[31] the *mantra* called *Ashtākshara* should be repeated at the time of the *sandhyā*, by pure-minded devotees of mine always in order to purify their

29. Dakshasmriti
30. Manusmriti : 4-153
31. Mahabharatha : Aswamedhika Parva: 98-69

selves", and "uttering the *Dvaya* always in this manner with its meaning at heart" in the *gadya* — these instructions should be carried out without any conflict with the performance of the rites (*nitya and naimittika*) which are compulsory of performance and at such times as are left over after their performance Narada and others have also stated:— "The *japa* (namely, the repetition of *Ashtākshara*) should be performed at such times as do not conflict with the performance of rites ordained in the *s'rutis* and the *smritis*." Vangipuram Nambi, too, has said:—"Having spent your time in performing the *homa* in rites like *Agnihotra* etc" Even in his last days, the author of *S'rī Bhāshya* stood up with great difficulty and offered the *anjali* of water at the time of *sandhyā*. Therefore giving up the rites of the *varṇas* and the *ās'ramas* on the pretext that they are dependent on the *upādhi* of the body is opposed to such things as the traditional observances of the ancients. If this pretext were sound, since even such special forms of service (in temples) as the weaving of garlands and the lighting of lamps cannot be performed without the *upādhi* (or conditioning factor) of the body, the senses and the like—even these would have to be given up (by the man who has realised his essential nature *(svarūpa)*. If the performance of such services is desired, the external purity *(āchāra)* and the purificatory rites *(samskāras)* which qualify (a person) for such service, cannot be given up.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS:—*

Observing the restrictions concerning food, residence* (if the reading is *graha*) or receiving from the good *āchārya* the *mantras* prescribed for the person, †money, caste and the like, one should render service to the Lord of Lakshmi in accordance with one's ability and with no other aim or purpose.

---

NOTE*:—One should live near Bhagavatas:

†Money should not be received as a gift from the unworthy.

32. Sri Ramanuja: Gadya:

Just in the same way as a chaste wife looks after her auspicious thread, clothes and the like with the greatest care, the *prapanna* should preserve the path and manner prescribed in the *s'āstras* for the service of the Lord.

The husband takes proper care of his wife either with punishment or with favours, respectively, when she loses her thread and the like or guards them with care. So also will the Lord (his devotee for giving up or performing the enjoined rites).

To reflect on such things as the caste of devotees merely for the purpose of treating them with disregard will bring ruin; but if it is done only for understanding the restrictions enjoined in the *s'āstras*, there is no harm in it anywhere.

That is the reason why, in the *s'āstras*, Dharmavyadha Tuladhara, Sabari, Vidura and others are described only by their respective castes.

Their conduct, too, as described in the Itihasas, was only in accordance with their castes; if there was* any exceptional circumstances (in their lives against the rules of their caste), it was due to the exceptional instructions or regulations. The *dharmas* or rites prescribed for a certain place, a certain period of time, a certain *adhikārī* and the like should not be adopted at a different place and a different time or by another *adhikārī*.

Some (people) who cannot understand the purport of certain episodes (in the Itihasas and Puranas) increase the *līlā rasa* which Bhagavan enjoys in Kaliyuga. " Daughters-in-law should be treated with regard and properly adorned by their mothers-in-law, their fathers-in-law, their husbands and so also by their brothers-in-law who desire to have varied prosperity. Those houses which are cursed by daughters-in-law on account of their ill treatment will fall into ruin as if pulled down by evil spirits ". In statements

(*NOTE: Vidura was cremated according to Brahma Medha rites because an aerial voice ordered it.)

like the above, the injunction about treating (the daughter-in-law) with regard has, on account of propriety, to be determined with proper restrictions in each case (the mother-in-law's regard is shown differently from that of the husband or the brother-in-law and so on). So also injunctions regarding the respect to be shown to devotees among *mlecchas* and the like have to be understood with proper reservations and restrictions.

These reservations and restrictions are established also by the practice of successive generations of men accepted on all hands as wise and virtuous. Therefore the performance of the Lord's service along with the observance of the regulations enjoined for the respective castes and *ās'ramas* is not opposed to the state of supreme and exclusive devotion to the Lord *(parmaikāntitva)*.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

Even the service rendered directly to the Lord of Lakshmi is surely divided by good men into two classes :— valuable and worthless.

That (service) is declared to be valuable service which is rendered by the man who has done what he ought to do *(i e.* the *prapanna)* with no other aim and for no other purpose *(i. e.* for its own sake) or for the protection of such persons as *gurus*.

That (service) is declared to be of no value which is rendered for ostentation (or vanity), for injuring others, for preventing others from rendering service or for the sake of some gain.

The Lord of all receives, with His feet, the service rendered by those have no supreme and exclusive devotion to Him and that done by those who have supreme and exclusive devotion to Him, with His head. This idea is expressed by Bhagavan Veda Vyasa in the following (passages):—" That which[33] is offered to the gods and the *Pitris* (Manes) in accordance with the prescribed rules

33. Mahabharata: Santi Parva: 358–63, 64.

reaches the *feet* of the God of gods. The rites performed by wise men who have supreme and exclusive devotion to Bhagavan - these Bhagavan receives with His *head* ".

The rites, *nitya* and *naimittika*, which are performed in this way as commandments of the Lord *(ājnā)* and those valuable services which are rendered by a man for the pleasure of the Lord as those approved by Him *(anujnā)* — these have no connection with *prapatti* and this is declared by the injunction contained in the word *parityajya* (having given up) (in the *charama s'loka*).

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

1 Therefore one should not perform, for the sake of *prapatti*, those things of which one is capable, nor should one acquire, for the sake of *prapatti*, the ability or skill needed to accomplish what one is incapable of.

According to this interpretation (of the word *parityajya* in the *Charama s'loka*), *ākinchanya* or being destitute of *upāyas* which confers competence *(adhikāra)* for *prapatti* is suggested by the sentence which states "Do not grieve". If *parityajya*, on the other hand, is considered as an *anuvāda* or expression of what has already occurred (namely, the person being incapable of any *upāya*), then, the word *eka* (me *alone*) indicates that among those rites which arise from the Lord's command and those which are approved of by him, there is no connection between such of them as are performed as being within the range of a man's ability and *prapatti*. In this interpretation, the sentence *ma s'uchah* (Do not grieve) makes clear the qualification *(adhikāra)* needed for *prapatti* which has already been expressed (in *parityajya)* and indicates also the manner in which the *prapanna* should conduct himself *after* the performance of *prapatti* *(i. e.)* being free from all care or anxiety.

There are some other ways of interpreting the word (*parityjya)* without treating the injunction regarding 'giving up' as having no authority :—

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS :—*

2. What is asked to be given up may be stated to be the prevention of the vain effort to perform what one is not capable of or the giving up of such vain effort along with the shame or remorse due to one's inability (to do it in full).

3 The word *tyāga* contained in *parityajya* may also be considered as preventing the continuance of the trivial desire to perform (these rites) like a drowning man catching at a reed or a blade of grass.

4. In the *Brahma Sūtras*, it is declared that any *one* of the *vidyās* (thirty two *vidyās* or forms of meditation described in the *Upanishads)* may be adopted at one's option, as all of them yield the same fruit. By drawing our attention to it, the injunction for *tyāga* contained in *parityajya* may also be to suggest that *prapatti* is like the Brahma missile, which proves ineffective if any other *upāya* is also adopted:

(To sum up :—) The forms of injunction may be such as follows :—

1. To the man who proceeds to adopt what he is not capable of, it says "Don't".

2. To the man who is firmly determined to do what is not in his power, it says, "Give up this determination".

3. If a man were to adopt one of the *upāyas* (other than *prapatti*) which are left open to the option (of the aspirant to *mukti*), it says to him that, by the principle of the Brahma missile, it would conflict with the effectiveness of *prapatti*.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS* :—

Therefore the meanings of the words *sarva dharman parityajya* (giving up all *dharmas*) which are approved of by the wise are as follows :—

(1) incompetence to do those things that are not within one's power gives competence for *prapatti*; and

(2) being destitute of all other *upāyas* is a qualification for *prapatti*;

(3) the *dharmas* or rites being no accessory or *anga* to *prapatti*;

(4) the prevention of effort in trying to do what is not possible for one;

(5) the giving up of the desire to do what is beyond one's ability;

(6) the indication of the principle of the Brahma missile.

The interpretation (which is given by some) that what is asked to be given up is the *dharmas* or rites associated with other deities (than Bhagavan) is not objectionable, but as this applies to both the man who adopts *bhakti* or *upāsana* and the man who adopts *prapatti*, this interpretation is inappropriate here (in the context specially relating to the *prapanna*).

"The giving [34]up of *upāyas*" stated in such passages as the following :— One should give up the *upāyas* and also the *apāyas* (those activities that are forbidden)" should also be interpreted in the same way.

*(TAMIL VERSE EMBODYING THESE IDEAS :)*

"Do not endeavour to do what is beyond your power though you have begun the attempt; at the outset, it is the part of wisdom to give up the desire to do what lies beyond your ability; the path

34. Lakshmi Tantra.

of *prapatti* does not require any aids ; if you desire other aids for it, it will lose its potency like the Brhama missile ; you are not among those who have the full knowledge required to follow the path of *bhakti* or *upāsana*, which takes a long time to bear fruit; hence if you seek my feet as your refuge reflecting on your being destitute of other *upāyas*, I will pardon all your sins": Let us extol the great and good qualities of the holy Sri Krishna who spoke these words.

### *THE MEANING OF THE WORDS MĀM AND AHAM IN THE CHARAMA S'LOKA:—*

As stated in the context[35] in the *Gītā*, which describes the secret of *avatāra* or incarnation and that in which Sri Krishna[36] declares Himself as (Purushottama), the primary aim of the words *mām* (me) and *aham* (I) (in the *charama s'loka*) is to disclose (Bhagavan's) easy accessibility and His absolute independence (and omnipotence) respectively.

### *SANSKRIT S'LOKAS:—*

He who knows the secret of incarnation to consist in its being real, in the incarnation continuing in its real nature (as Bhagavan) though incarnating in lower forms, in its being constituted of the (transcendental) substance called *s'uddhasatvam* in its being caused only by Bhagavan's own will or desire (and not by *karma)*; in its occurrence at a time when there is decline of *dharma* and in its being occasioned for the purpose of protecting the good — (he who knows all this) will never be born again.

This knowledge of the secret of incarnation is required for the *bhakta*, who has *prapatti* as an *anga*, to complete and perfect his *upāya*. To the man who has adopted *prapatti* as the direct and independent means, it reveals the easy accessibility of the omnipotent and independent Lord. The accessibility and omnipotence

35. Bhagavad Gita : Chap. IV. 36. Bhagavad Gita : Chap. XV.

which are declared in these two contexts are complementary to each other.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS* :—

Even if a person is independent and omnipotent, if he is not accessible, no one will seek him (for protection). Even if a person is sought (for protection) on account of his easy accessibility, he cannot award the desired fruit if he is dependent on others.

Towards one who is not independent, there is no possibility of rendering service, as the person rendering service, might think of acting as he pleases; and towards one who is not easily accessible, service might be possible though difficult, but as is seen in the world, it does not confer happiness or pleasure (on the person rendering service).

The Saviour who is both accessible and supreme is not only merely accessible like a blade of grass but exalted (in status and nature). Though exalted and supreme, he is not inaccessible like Mount Meru, but easily accessible. Therefore He is both capable of being sought (for protection) and capable of being attained. In these two words *mām* and *aham*, the eagerness with which the universal Saviour and *S'eshī* is awaiting an opportunity for protecting (the *jīva*) is disclosed.

Iswara who thus waits for an occasion or opportunity as stated in the passage :— " The Lord[37] expects a prayer for protection," is ever favourably inclined saying, " When will these *(jīvas)* pray for my help ? " This attitude of His is suggested by the word *mām* (me). The word *aham* (I) shows His attitude of readiness to confer, for His own glory, the desired fruit as quickly as possible saying, " When shall I take back (and wear) (these *jīvas*) like jewels from which the dirt (*prakriti*) has been removed."

Thus the *charama s'loka* indicates by the words *mām* and *ekam* (me alone) the *Siddhopāya* who does not require anything

37. Lakshmi Tantram.

else than the surrender of responsibility (*bharanyāsa*) with the prayer for protection performed according to the injunction. And by the words *s'araṇam vraja* (seek as refuge or *upāya*) it shows, in the form of an injunction (*vidhi*) *Sādhyopāya* (namely, *prapatti*) which is the means of winning His grace. Since the *vidyā* called *prapatti*, which is here enjoined, is ordained as a means of propitiating the Saviour, it becomes an *upāya* and resembles in that respect *bhakti yoga*. Iswara who is propitiated thereby is the direct means or *upāya* for *moksha*. What has to be understood as a distinguishing feature of this *vidyā* (*prapatti*) is its being an *upāya* which does not require (any aid or accessory). All the attributes necessory for this purpose are also signified in the words *mām* and *ekam* (me alone).

By the word *mām* (me) which denotes the Saviour whose nature is indicated in such *s'lokas* as the following :— "This Narayana [38] who has the ocean of milk as His abode has now come to the city of Madhura leaving His bed of Adhisesha" — by this word (*mām*) are disclosed His being the Universal Saviour, His being the universal *S'eshī*, His being the Lord of Sri, His being Narayana (the resting place of Naras) which are revealed in *Tirumantra* and *Dvaya*, and so also the qualities which can be inferred from them, namely, omniscience, omnipotence and the like, and, so also, such qualities as His being supremely compassionate, His good nature (*saus'īlya*) and His love which are all the marks of supremacy and accessibility. (The word *mām* also discloses), like the word having the dual termination, *viz*, *charaṇau* (the two feet) in *Dvaya*, the divinely auspicious *form* of Parthasarathi which suggests both His being the Supreme Being and His easy accessibility and which is our auspicious refuge. Here these four qualities of His, namely, His love, His being the Master, His good nature (*saus'īlya*) and His accessibility which are stated in such passages as the following :— " O Thou that hast incomparable attributes, Thou that ownest the three worlds, Thou that art my

38. Harivamsam: 113-62

Saviour! Thou that dwellest on Mount Venkatam, which is eagerly longed for by hosts of incomparable gods and *rishis!*" — these four qualities are revealed when Sri Krishna did not treat Arjuna's misplaced compassion and affection at the beginning with disregard, when He Himself declared: "There is no[39] one higher than I", when He served as charioteer to Arjuna who addressed Him as "O, Krishna O Yadava" and said "Drive my chariot and station it between the two armies" and when, at Arjuna's request, He revealed to Him His universal form immanent in all things and when later, as soon as he prayed to see His former delightful form as Sri Krishna, He stood before him once again as his charioteer. Among the aforesaid qualities of the Saviour, the most important attributes that are essential for the protection of those who seek Him have been briefly set forth in the *Bhagavat S'āstra*: "Though Bhagavan[40] who keeps all under His control is both *omniscient* and *compassionate*, He expects a prayer for protection, since He has to conduct the course of the world of *samsāra*" and in this *s'loka* of the wise *āchārya*, "In the face[41] of Thy omniscience, omnipotence and compassion, my sins cannot bear fruit." Among these three qualities, knowledge and might are required in common for conferring punishment and favour. The Lord's being the Master serves the purpose both of His deriving the delight of *Līlā* from man in *samsāra* and His deriving enjoyment or *bhoga* in Vaikunta from the soul that has obtained *mukti*. So this attribute of Lordship cannot restrain the Lord's *jnāna* or knowledge and *s'akti* or might so as to operate only in the work of protection. Compassion and its varieties (literally - branches) good nature, love and the like are solely responsible for the conferment of favours. The ancients who appreciated this distinguishing feature of mercy wrote as follows:— "O Thou [42]that art the Lord of Brahma, the god of the gods! I have not the ability to adore Thee or to praise Thee. (Therefore) with com-

39. Bhagavad Gita: 7-7

40. Lakshmi Tantra: 17-78.

41. Atimanushastava: 61.

42. Vishnu puranam: 5-7-70

passion alone in Thy heart, bestow Thy grace on me." "I relied[43] on Thy compassion alone for protection." "I will [44]not believe that I could be saved by anything other than Thy compassion," "I look to[45] Thy compassion alone for salvation," "O Thou that, [46]in spite of having the glorious Lakshmi, art so full of compassion as to come and abide permanently in my heart", It is impossible[47] to protect me except with Thy holy compassion," "I will sweep[48] Thy temple (and render such other service) being the recipient of Thy compassion and the compassion of Thy consort who dwells in the lotus," "Showing[49] Thy mercy with the exclamation 'Ha! Ha!!", "Show me [50]only Thy compassion so that I, Thy servant, may realise that I have nothing else to attain than Thee and that I have no other *upāya* (than Thee) and so that I may find delight only in rendering service to Thee." "O Lord of Hastigiri[51]! Those that are devoted to Thee by their qualities and actions with the knowledge of Thee — it is Thy compassion which has made them devoted to thee. I consider that only that compassion is a source of strength to me who am destitute of *upāyas*." In these ways, these ancients looked upon (the Lord's) compassion as their refuge and considered the relationship of the *s'eshī* to the *s'esha* and other qualities (of the Lord) as the obedient servants of compassion and became solely dependent on the Lord's mercy. Sita devi also said, in spite of the existence of other qualities:— "Rama[52], the descendant of Kakustha, extended his protection to him (Kakasura) out of compassion, though he deserved the punishment of being killed".

Since Sri Ramanuja has also written in his *gadya*[53] "At *the time of the death of the body, you will, by my grace alone, become

43. Perialvar Tirumozhi: 5–4–1
44. Peria Tirumozhi 11–8–8
45. Perumal Tirumozhi: 5–4
46. Peria Tirumozhi: 9–5–10
47. Tiruviruttham 62
48. Tiruvoimozhi 9-2-1
49. Tiruvoimozhi: 5-1–9
50. Alavandar Stotram 48
51. Varadarajastavam 94.
52. Ramayana: Sundarakanda: 38-33.
53. Saranagati gadya.

(*NOTE: Bhagavan's words to Sri Ramanuja).

wise and have a vision of me etc.," the primary importance of (the Lord's) compassion is indicated. Facing (Arjuna) with this primary quality so essential for protection and other attributes which are ancillary to it, Sri Krishna referred to Himself as *mām* (me).

*THE MEANING OF EKAM IN THE CHARAMA SLOKA*:

(1) While the singular form *mām* (me) itself indicates the idea of 'alone' *(ekam)*. the further use of the word *ekam* is, according to some, to disclose that He who is the object of attainment is Himself the means or *upāya* for that attainment like the (celestial) *kalpaka* tree giving itself (to those that ask). Thus (these commentators) suggest that the use of *eka* after *mām* is to suggest the identity of the object of attainment and the means of attaining it. This interpretation finds support in the sentence *mām ekam eva* in a similar context:— "By all[54] means, seek the protection only of me alone who am the inner self of all beings. You will then have no fear of any kind." Since the word *eva* (only) is already present, it is but proper to seek some other purpose for the existence or use of the word *ekam* in addition to *only*. (This purpose is the declaration of the oneness of the means and the end).

(2) As against this, others say that the word *ekam* which has the following meanings: 'chief', 'something other than', and 'there is no other than this', is, in this sentence, a mere synonym of 'no other' and means 'only' or 'alone' as in the *slokas*, "Those who [55] seek me alone (and no other) as their refuge will surmount the insurmountable *māyā*" and "Seek the protection of Him alone (and no other)". In this way they mention that by emphasising the fullness of the qualities of the Saviour, one is made to understand that one cannot adopt an *upāya* by one's own independence. If it be asked how, the answer is as follows:—"As

54. Bhagavatam: 11 - 12 - 14.
55. Bhagavad Gita: 7-14

the man adopts, for his own protection, the means ordained for Him by the *s'āstras* for propitiating (the Lord), it is just possible that he might think of himself also as doing something for his protection on an equal footing with the Saviour who is the *Siddhopāya*. Taking into account this possibility, the word *eka* denies that there is any *upāya* other than the Lord to make the *upāyas* two. If it be asked how this denial is made, the answer is as follows: It is true that the *jīva* is the doer according to the *pramāṇas*, for it is stated: – "*He is* the doer; otherwise the *s'āstras* could have no meaning or purpose". Still this doership of the *jīva* is dependent on the Supreme Being and is very limited (in its scope) besides being subject to hindrances. Therefore though he adopts the *upāya*, it is only on account of the Lord's grace as stated in the *s'loka*:— "Without Thy[58] compassion, O Varada, even the prayer that Thou shouldst be my *upāya* would not arise from me." When the Lord withholds His help and stimulation, the *jīva* cannot even stretch out his limbs or bend them. Therefore he practises the *upāya* revealed by the Lord, with the help of the body and the senses given by Him and with His help and looks up to Him like the *chātaka* bird for the desired fruit to be given by Him. So it is improper for the intelligent aspirant to *mukti* to consider himself, as another *siddhopāya* equal to the Lord, who is absolutely independent of others and whose activities extend everywhere and can meet with no hindrances or obstacles. This is, according to these commentators, the purport of the word *eka*. (only He and no other). (3) Following this line of reasoning, they say also that the word *eka* (one) is used to prevent the consideration of *prapatti* which is *sādhyopāya* as being equal to *Siddhopāya*. If it be asked how, the answer is as follows:— Although like *bhakti-yoga*, *prapatti* too, has been enjoined as an endeavour to propitiate (the Lord), yet its purpose is merely to allay the displeasure of the Supreme Ruler who has innate compassion and other such qualities. For the direct attainment of the desired fruit, it is only

56. Bhagavad Gita: 18–62
57. Brahma Sutras: 2–3–33
58. Varadarajastavam: 88

the will of the Lord who has, by His very nature, the ability and the compassion (necessary for protecting the *jīva*) — it is only His will that is the cause. He accepts the responsibility for protecting the *prapanna* who is absolutely destitue of *upāyas* and Himself stands in the place of such more difficult *upāyas* as *bhakti-yoga*. He expects only the *vyāja* (pretext or gesture) of *prapatti* accompanied by such things as the will to do what is pleasing to Him. This *nyāsa vidyā* does not require any ancillary rite or accessory and has this as its distinguishing feature. Therefore in this *vidyā*, He is the only *upāya* to be prayed for as stated in the following passages: "*S'araṇāgati*[59] consists in the thought "I pray that Thou alone shouldst be my *upāya*"; "I made Him the [60]subject of the thought that the Lord should be my *upāya*. Even this became possible only by virtue of His compassion." "O Lord[61] that mad'st me consent and placed me beneath Thy feet!" As stated in these passages, to place the mere *vyāja* or pretext *viz. prapatti*, which too was inspired only by Him acting as the *upāya*— to place it on an equal footing with Him is not proper. This is the purport of the word *eka* (only - no other).

Taking into consideration the fact 'that *sādhyopāya* is a mere pretext or gesture (*vyāja*) in relation to *Siddhopāya* and is without any importance, some (writers) exaggerated its insignificance by stating that *prapatti* consists merely in (1) the knowledge of the relation of the *s'esha* to the *s'eshī* (2) the mere knowledge that the Lord is the *Siddhopaya*, (3) nonresistance (to His grace) (4) mere acceptance or receptivity (5) the attitude of being different from *acit* or non-sentient matter (6) the activity of the sentient being and (7) serenity of mind (8) an attribute of the *adhikārī*. From these (exaggerated statements) it is not proper to conclude that any of them is the real meaning of *prapatti*, for the purport (of these exaggerations) is quite different. All these interpretations are opposed to the positive injunction contained in *s'araṇam vraja*

59. Ahirbudhnya samhita: 37–31
60. Tiruvoymozhi 8–8–3.
61. Tiruvoymozhi: 5 - 8 - 9.

(seek me as Thy Saviour). They would also lead to too wide an application (*atiprasanga*). We will explain how :— (1) & (2) If *praptti* were to consist only in the knowledge of the relationship of the *s'esha* to the *s'eshin* or in the knowledge that the Lord is *Siddhopāya*, then since this knowledge would of itself arise from the sentence or text (stating it), there would be no need to state it in the form of an injunction (ordaining 'know this'). If it be said that *moksha* might result from mere knowledge and without doing the thing enjoined in a *vidhi* or injunction, it would, as explained in *S'rī Bhāshya* and elsewhere (*Vedārthasangraha*), be opposed to (the spirit of) the injunctions directing one to *upāsanas*; if it be held that the man who has a knowledge of the truth should thereby acquire a different kind of knowledge called *prapatti*, then the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of this knowledge should be understood in accordance with the texts or passages ordaining the *dharma* (*s'araṇam vraja*), those that describe or define its characteristics (that it can yield fruits not attainable otherwise *etc.*) and those that prescribe the manner of adopting it (*anushtāna*) (the utterance of the *Dvaya* and the like). If the statement that *prapatti* consists only in the acceptance of *Siddhopāya* were true, it would mean that the man should first know *Siddhopāya* and then perform the action called 'surrender of responsibility' (*bharanyāsa*) for which he is competent and that this surrender should be preceded by the prayer enjoined in the *vidhis* or injunctions. (3) If *prapatti* were to consist in mere non-resistance (to the Lord's grace), it would mean (a) that it was possible for him to resist Iswara owing to superior strength. This would imply that Iswara is not omnipotent or (b) If resistance means resisting the Lord's grace by committing an offence and incurring punishment, it would follow that *prapatti* is only a means of propitiation (c) If resistance means resisting by means of one's own activity to protect oneself, then since there is no such resistance of the nature of activity in such states as *pralaya* and *sushupti* (dreamless sleep) and so also in the waking stake when the man is capable of action but does not act, Iswara would have to

award *moksha* to him. (4) If prapatti were to consist in mere acceptance, it would then stand on the same footing as *upāsana*. There would be no difference between the *bhakta* and the *prapanna*. (5) If *prapatti* were to consist merely in being different from non-sentient things, it would be present even when the man acts against the will of God. This, certainly, could not be the cause of being saved or protected. (6) If *prapatti* were to consist in the mere activity of the sentient being, not only *upāsanas* but other activities of the sentient being (like eating, breathing, *etc.*,) would be the cause of salvation. There would then be no difference between *prapatti* and all these activities. If it be said that *prapatti* is what happens to a man of its own accord, there would then be no need for instructions *(upades'a)* concerning it. (7) If it be said that *prapatti* means serenity of mind without the purpose of obtaining any fruit, then it would vary with different individuals in accordance with their respective tastes. (8) If *prapatti* were a mere attribute of the *adhikārī* (and not something to be done), the word *vraja* would be improper, for it lays down something to be done and there is no reference to any fruit or the desire for it (and the like). So it would not be proper to call *prapatti* an attribute of the *adhikārī*.* If it were possible to condemn (the performance of) *prapatti* in these ways, although it is enjoined as something to be performed, it would be equally possible to condemn also *upāsanas* and the like in the same manner In that case, the attempt to distinguish *prapatti* from *upāsanas* and the like (which was the reason for the argument) would fail. If it be said that though this *Siddhopāya* (Iswara) has accepted the responsibility of protecting one and is bent on granting the (desired) fruit, yet the man should consider that this acceptance is unnecessary, *prapatti* would then be a case of meditating on what is not true *(drishti vidhi)* (and it would not lead to *moksha*).

---

NOTE*: "He who desires *svarga* should perform Jyotishtoma". In this sentence, the *adhikari* is seen to be one who desires a certain fruit, namely *svarga*.

If it means the thought that the acceptance by Iswara, too, is unnecessary, it would be opposed to the idea contained in the words of the Lord *s'araṇam vraja* (seek me as the Saviour).

(NOTE*—*Drishti vidhi* eg. "Imagine the mind to be Brahman and meditate on it". This kind of meditation would not lead to *moksha.*)

Therefore Iswara is the object of propitiation and He is the *Siddhopāya* and is of great importance Both *bhakti* and *prapatti* are ways of propitiation and are *sadhyopāyas* which are not so important (The aspirant to *mukti*) should be firmly established in either of these two, according to his competence.

(4) It has also been stated by some (*āchāryas*) that the word *eka* is employed to indicate how the Saviour, who has accepted the responsibility, stands alone, requiring nothing else after the performance of *prapatti*, so that there need be no adoption of any of the means (like *upāsana)* prescribed for the attainment of the desired fruit. This may be explained as follows:— If a person has performed *prapatti* as an *anga* and then adopts also *upāsanas* and the like as *angī*, the Saviour becomes the *upāya* for the fruit desired. In the case of the man who adopts *prapatti* as a direct and independent means, being destitute of the other *upāyas* and impatient of delay, the same Iswara takes, upon His own qualities, the burden that lies between *prapatti* and Himself. As stated in the following passages:— "Those who[62] are incapable of *bhakti yoga* and seek Thee as *upāya* — they, too, pass beyond *samsāra* and reach Thy abode, *Vaikunta*", and "Thou hast[63] Thyself given Thy feet as the fruit of my attainment and as the *upāya* for attaining it" — as stated here, the Lord Himself, who is endowed with the qualities essential for it, stands as the Dispenser of the fruit desired, without requiring any ancillary rite or *dharma*. Therefore what is stated in the *charama-s'loka* comes to this:— "Bear this in mind and seek Me alone for your salvation". (5) It is said by some that the word *eka* is used here for the purpose of making it

62. Brahma puranam. 63. Tiruvoymozhi: 5 - 7 - 10.

clear that, when *prapatti* is performed to Him who is perfect in every way, nothing else is required except such as the will to do what is pleasing to the Lord. Therefore the Lord teaches that one should not introduce, into this, ancillary rites such as are required for the *vidyās*, under the impression that they, too, form *upāyas* for propitiating Him. The Lord's purport (in the *s'loka*) is as follows :— "*Prapatti* does not require any aids such as are performed either because they are my commands or because their performance is approved of by me. When I become gracious owing to the performance of *prapatti*, I am bent on granting the desired fruit and stand as the one and only surety for this *upāya* which is capable of being performed in an instant. In regard to the fruit of this *prapatti*, nothing else need be performed. I do not require any such aid in regard to my determination to save Thee". This amounts to saying that, with the exception of such things as the will to do what is pleasing (to the Lord), no other auxiliary causes should be added on in the name of ancillaries to *prapatti*.

As stated (in the *S'araṇāgati Gadya* "Thou that utterest the *Dvaya* in some manner or other" and in *Varadarāja stava*. "By the mere words which state *prapatti*, I long to see Thee — Thee that canst not be attained by *bhakti*", even though a man has not the clear understanding necessary for the full and perfect performance of *prapatti*, this *upāya* will be effective even if it be adopted in a less satisfactory manner. Therefore there is certainly no need to seek ancillary rites or *dharmas* for this *upāya*.

(It is true that) (in the *Rāmāyaṇa*) it is stated :— "Then Rama,[64] the slayer of his enemies, spread *kus'a* grass on the beach, had his arm shining like the body of a serpent for his pillow, folded his hands in *anjali* and lay down facing the east and expecting the arrival of the god of the ocean" and, likewise, in the story of Brahmadatta in the episode of Saptavyadha, "The king[65] was in great danger and sought with devotion Narayana, the chief of the

94. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda 21-1, 2. 65. Harivamsa: 27 - (11 - 13).

gods, the Saviour and the Ruler over all, as his *upāya* with concentration of mind and fasting for six nights. The renowned king saw in his contemplation (*dhyāna*) the Lord Narayana" But these ancillary rites that are described (in the *Rāmāyana* and *Harivams'a*) are not necessary for *prapatti.* In these two places, what is of importance is the ritual of sitting with the intention of starving unto death and therefore the ancillary actions described there are proper. The same explanation holds good in the case of *namaskāra* well performed. (There is no *prapatti* in all these cases). But in *prapatti*, no other requisites are needed except such as the will to do what is pleasing to the Lord – such as are stated in the chapters on *Prapatti*. We do not find any ancillary rites except such requisites, at the time, as the will to do what is pleasing, in the following instances of those who performed *prapatti* with only their being destitute of all *upāyas* for their sole wealth. (a) Droupadi, (b) Damayanti, (c) Rakshasis, (d) Vibhishana, (e) Kshatrabandhu, (f) Muchukunda, (g) Gajendra, (h) the Pandavas, (i) the gods, (j) Sumukha, (k) Trisanku, (l) Sunaschepa, (m) Kirata, (n) Kaka, (o) Kapota and the like We find that, by the instantaneous performance of mere *prapatti* without any other requisites, the desired fruit was obtained by each of these that sought protection In the same manner, even in *prapatti* performed for the sake of *moksha*, there is nothing to prevent the attainment of the fruit at the desired time. This is the purport also of the words *mā s'uchah* ( Do not grieve ).

If *parityajya* is interpreted to mean that there is nothing else required for *prapatti*, this interpretation of the word *eka* may be considered as confirming or emphasizing this. ( It need not therefore be looked upon as redundant). Or the word *eka* may be considered to have another meaning, namely, the idea of the *upāya*

(a) to Krishna at the time of the removal of her *sari*: (b) to the gods at the time of the Swayamvara: (c) Trijata to Sita: (d) to Rama; (e) to Bhagavan after Narada's advice; (f) when the Lord appeared before him; (g) to Bhagavan; (h) to Bhagavan (i) to Bhagavan; (j) to Upendra in dread of garuda; (k) to Visvamitra; (l) to Visvamitra; (m) to the pigeon; (n) to Rama; (o) to Sibi

and the *upeya* being the same. If the word *eka* is considered as stating that *prapatti* does not require anything else, then the word *parityajya* may be considered as having the other meanings stated before.

If it be asked why the word *eka* should be used as an adjective of the Saviour, when (properly speaking), it should qualify *prapatti* (so that it might mean that *prapatti* alone is necessary without any ancillary *dharmas*), the answer is as follows: The words, *mām ekam* (me alone) are employed to show that, in the case of the man destitute of other *upāyas,* these ancillary *dharmas* other than *prapatti* are in no way connected with the Saviour as the means of propitiating Him. (6) It is also stated by some (commentators) that, as in the first half of the *s'loka* we find the words *sarva dharmān* (all *dharmas*) and in the second half the word *sarva pāpebhyo* (from all sins), the word *eka* stands here as the counter-part or counter-poise to the world *all.* If this be admitted, then the gist of the *charma s'loka* would be:

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:—*

If a man is in despair because of his inability to adopt such means or *upāyas* as will yield the respective fruits desired by him, then, I myself (single as I am) will stand for him as the respective means or *upāya* to enable him to secure that fruit."

This statement may be explained as follows:— "Whatever[66] be the object that a man, whoever he may be, wishes to attain and whatever be the means or *upāyas* by which he cannot attain them and likewise, the attainment of *moksha* desired by the aspirant, which cannot be attained by *karma yoga*, *jnāna yoga* and *bhakti yoga*, all these fruits, can, O great sage, be attained by *prapatti*. The place desired by the aspirant to *mukti* is that supreme abode from which the man who reaches it never returns". As declared (in the passage cited above), when a man falls into grief because he cannot obtain any one of the fruits desired by him either because

66. Ahirbudhnyasamhita. 37–25

of ignorance of the means prescribed in the *s'āstras* for acquiring the respective fruit, or because even while possessing that knowledge, he is unable to adopt the prescribed means, or because, while possessing both (the knowledge and the ability), he is too impatient to wait until the time when the fruit will be attained thereby — (when a man falls into grief in this way) the *Charma-s'loka* declares to him, "You need not go about in search of these means. I will myself be the only and sole *upāya* for your attainment of all these fruits, provided I am propitiated by the performance of *prapatti*. The *Charma S'loka* says, as it were :— " This single and sovereign medicine will give you all the health which a larger number of other medicines may confer on you. It is enough, if, instead of falling into despair, you take this single medicine. This will cure all the ailments that can be cured by other medicines. After taking this medicine, you can enjoy all pleasures. Therefore you need not fall into despair thinking that you have lost your health and the pleasures." This is, as it were, the meaning of the *Charama-s'loka*.

Though the word *eka* stands as the counter-part of the word *sarva* (all) and qualifies the Saviour as He is most important, being the *Sidhopāya*, yet it is tantamount to stating that *prapatti alone* is enjoined as the single *dharma* in the place of all other *dharmas*, as in the phrase " by *nyāsa alone*" From this it follows that even those who desire the three ends (other than *moksha (viz).*, (*dharma*, *artha* and *kāma*) may perform *prapatti* to Bhagavan for securing them. So it is not proper to have any contact with other deities except as they figure as attributes to the Lord in the performance of the *nitya* and *naimittika* rites, as stated in such *s'lokas* as the following :— " I am [67]propitiating Him from whom, O Indra, you have obtained your position of lordship. I will not adore you. Here is my *anjali* to you. You may strike me with your thunderbolt or abstain from doing so. I will never adore any one but Govinda."

67. Vishnu Tantram 2-14 & 28

Even those who seek other *upāyas* for attaining *moksha* ( like *bhakti yoga* ) may perform *prapatti* in order to get rid of the hindrances in the way ( of those *upāyas* ). *Prapatti* is suitable in the case also of those who want to get rid of obstacles to the attainment ( of Bhagavan ) *viz.* sins and this is declared here ( in the *charama-s'loka* ) to show that it is capable of securing any fruit that may be desired ( by one ). The idea that *prapatti* will destroy the obstacles to the *upāyas* for attainment (namely, sins) is conveyed (by Sri Ramanuja) in his *Gītā Bhāshya* in his second interpretation (of the *s'loka*). In the *Gadya*, he has declared that *prapatti* will help to get rid of the hindrances to the attainment of Bhagavan It does not mean that, in those two places, Sri Ramanuja expresses one of these two ideas in disregard of the other Both passages illustrate the potency of this *upāya (prapatti)* which can secure all desired ends The *praṇavam (aum)* enters into the body of another *mantra*, *viz. namo Nārāyaṇāya* as a part thereof and yet is itself an independent *mantra*. So also this *prapatti* forms an *anga* to *bhakti* in the case of others. This is evident from the authority of the texts. That *bhakti* and *prapatti* stand as alternative *upāyas* determined by the competence of the persons concerned is evident from such passages as the following: " I am capable of being attained O, Thou of great wisdom, either by deep *bhakti* or by *prapatti* on the part of those who desire to render service to me. I cannot be attained by any other means ".

(There is a well-known *s'loka* which says) :— " A man attains *moksha* either by right knowledge, or by death in the waters of the Ganga or by *namaskāra* well-performed or by *bhakti* ". In such passages those that are direct means of attaining *mukti* are stated along with others that are not direct but only auxiliary This is only a way of exaggerating the importance of these indirect means.

## *CONCLUSION IN REGARD TO THE MEANING OF THE WORD EKA*

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS :—*

Six meanings have (thus) been pointed out by *āchāryas* for the word *eka.* They are (1) the identity of the object of attainment (Bhagavan) and the means or *upāya* for that attainment (2) the denial of one's own importance (*i. e.* of the *jiva's* works); (3) *prapatti* being only a mere pretext or gesture (*vyāja*), (4) the absence of any relation or connection between *prapatti* and other *upāyas*; (5) and likewise, the absence of any relation or connection between *prapatti* and the *angas* or ancillary *dharmas* (*karma yoga*, etc.) of other *upāyas* (like *bhakti*) and (6) *prapatti* as a single means of securing all desired ends without any distinction whatsoever.

## *THE SAVIOUR IS BHAGAVĀN WITH S'RĪ AS HIS ATTRIBUTE :*

There are some commentators who state that the meaning of the word *eka* (a single one) declares that the Saviour is only one (namely, Bhagavan) and that Sri has nothing to do with salvation). But their contention does not stand to reason. Just as qualities and forms qualify the Lord as His attributes, so also Sri is an attribute of His (inseparable from Him). She is 'the ruler over all beings' and is dear to Bhagavan and is declared in the *s'rutis* as sharing in His duties and as ever bent on protecting those that seek her help. Though it is stated (in the *Chāndogya Upanishad* and other Vedic texts) that the material cause of the Universe is only one *(sat)*, yet other things that are requisite as material causes are understood as existing as His attributes (*viz. cit* and *acit* in their subtle and unmanifested forms) on the authority of the *pramāṇas.* So also in this context, *S'rī* should be understood, although not distinctly stated. Even when a single form of *upāsana* or meditation is enjoined, the qualities that are connected with the object of meditation enter also into it. Similarly though a single deity is enjoined as the Saviour to be sought, Sri,

who is His attribute, should also be considered as being associated with Him (in the act of salvation). The *Siddhopaya* (namely, Bhagavan) is (of course) single but His qualities remain with Him (though not explicitly stated). In the same way, in the opinion of those who see with the eye of the *S'āstra*, Lakshmi (His spouse) is associated inseparably with Him as an attribute. Light and the object emitting light (are inseparable from each other) and when one is mentioned, the other is also present by association Likewise when either (Bhagavan or *S'rī*) is mentioned, the other is also present by virtue of their being always with each other Sages have declared in the *smrītis* that she helps (*jīvas*) to cross the sea of *samsāra* and both of them (Bhagavan and *S'rī*) have themselves spoken to the same effect in such (*samhitās*) treatises as *sātvatam*. In *Dvaya* it is considered appropriate that *kaīnkarya* or service in the state of attainment *(moksha)* should extend to Sri (as to Bhagavan) So *S'rī* is equally connected with Him in both the states, that of the endeavour for attaining *moksha* (the first half of *Dvaya*) and that after attainment (the second half of it). Therefore, on the authority of many Vedic texts and *S'mritis* which cannot be stated to have some other purport, the single one who is to be sought as the Saviour is the Lord with His attribute *S'rī* who is His consort.

## *THE MEANING OF THE WORD S'ARAṆAM IN THE CHARAMA-S'LOKA :*

The meanings that have (already) been given to the word *s'araṇam* occurring in *Dvayam* (on p. ) should be borne in mind in regard to the word *s'araṇam* employed here in the *charama-sloka*. This prayer for refuge or *upāya* (*s'araṇam*) though taught to Arjuna, should be considered applicable to all and this is evident from the* *S'vetās'vatara Upanishad* and from Sri Ramanuja's words in the *(S'araṇāgati) Gadya*: "O Thou that art the Saviour of all beings in the world ignoring the differ-

(*NOTE): VI chapter, 18: Desirous of *mukti* I seek refuge of HIM who created Brahma before and taught him the Vedas.

ences that may exist among those that seek Thee". Similarly in such passages as the following :— "Those Brahmins[69] who know the first part of the Veda and those people who understand the meaning of its latter part declare that the Supreme Being, Sri Krishna, is the ever-existing *dharma* or *upāya*", "The great[70] and eminent Rishis say that Thou art the refuge and the Saviour of those that have sought Thy protection". "He is the [71]*Yoga (upāya)* and the one who leads those who know *bhakti yoga* to their goal". and "Bhagavan [71A]whom the wise call the eternal means *(upāya)* and the goal of attainment" — (in such passages) also, since there is no limitation of meaning, it has to be understood that the Saviour is for all. The only requisite for seeking Him as the Saviour or Refuge is that the person should be destitute of any other refuge or protector.

### *THE MEANING OF THE WORD VRAJA:*

The word *vraja* also, like the word *prapadye* (in *Dvaya*) enjoins self-surrender with all its auxiliaries In the word (*prapadye* in *Dvaya*), the first person is used, because it is the thought or meditation in the mind of the man who performs *prapatti*- Here (in the *charamas'loka*) it is in the second person, since the injunction is addressed to the man (Arjuna) who stands opposite to the Lord *(i. e.)* Sri Krishna) saying :— "I am[72] Thy disciple and (it is only fitting that) Thou shouldst order me to do what is right". Auxiliaries like the will to do what is pleasing to the Lord are also indicated here and may be found suggested in *suitable words as in *Dvaya*, There is a (well-known) principle which states: "When an action is enjoined in the *s'āstra*, a single performance of it satisfies the requirements of the *s'āstra*". The

69. Mahabharata : Aranyaparva 71 - 122.
70. Ramayana - Yuddha Kanda 120-18
71. Sahasranamam (Mahabharata)
71A. Vishnutatva: 72-4
72. Bhagavad Gita : II-7

NOTE*: The will to do what is pleasing and to avoid what is displeasing in *mam*; being destitute of all means in *parityajya* and intense faith, and the prayer for protection in *saranam vraja*

*upāsana* however, is an exception to this general rule because it requires frequent repetition. But *prapatti* is no such exception (and hence a single performance will quite do). This statement is confirmed also by such words as the following: — " To the man who [73]performs *prapatti* only once and says "I exist for Thee" — to that man I grant freedom from fear from all beings. This is my vow". To the man who performs *bharanyāsa* (the surrender of responsibility) to the generous and omnipotent (Lord), there is no reason for delay in the attainment except his own desire. Therefore in the case of this *nyāsa vidyā*, the peculiarity is that it arrests even the consequences of past *karma* which have already begun to operate (*prārabdha karma*).

In this connection some (commentators) ask :— " An action maybe enjoined for performance only by a man who has freedom of will and action. How can an action be enjoined (in the word *vraja*) for performance by one who has been taught as being absolutely dependent (on the Lord) in the Vedanta and other *s'āstras* treating of the self and in such as the *moola mantra*? This (question) is the result of an inadequate understanding of what is meant by complete dependence on another (the Lord). As determined in *Vedanta* (*S'āstras*), " He (*i. e.* the *jīva* is the doer;[74] otherwise the *s'āstras* which enjoin *dharmas* would have no purpose or meaning", and " The doership[75] (of the *jīva*) is dependent on the Supreme Self, for the *s'ruti* says so". Since the *jīva* is an agent or doer subject to the will of Bhagavan, there is nothing to prevent an injunction asking him to do something.

Just as nonsentient things (*acit*) like ether and fire bear the attributes respectively of sound and heat created by Iswara, the *jīva's* absolute dependence on Iswara consists in bearing this burden of free will (and responsibility) (granted to him by Iswara). If it be maintained that he has no responsibility at all as a doer or agent, it would be like the heresies (*siddhānta*) which attribute

73. Ramayana: Yuddha Kanda 18-33
74. Brahma Sutras: 2 - 3 - 33.
75. Brahma Sutras: 2 - 3 - 40.

doership (respectively) to *prakriti* and *avidyā* (Samkhya and Advaita). If (on the other hand) it be maintained that the *jiva's* doership is dependent only on himself (and on nobody else), then since it would resemble the heresy which does not admit the existence of one who is in supreme control of all selves, it would be a form of atheism. If it is held that the doership which comes from the will of the Lord is merely the state of being the knower, there would be no such thing as a desire for the ends of life (*purushārtha*) and the endeavour to attain them. If it be held that apart from the knowledge and the particular form of knowledge called desire, there is no such thing as effort (or mental activity), it would be impossible to adopt any means for securing objects that are tangible or intangible and for rendering service for its own sake. Therefore it has to be admitted that the self has these three (attributes):—knowledge, desire, and effort (knowing, feeling and willing). Among these (three), desire and effort are only different modifications or states of knowledge and this may be understood from the principle of logical economy *adopted by Sri Ramanuja in his *Vedārthasangraha*.

The doership or agentship which consists in being the seat (*ās'raya*) of an action (or the place where an action takes place) is a common attribute of both sentient beings and non sentient things (for the latter also move about and undergo changes). But the seat (*ās'raya*) of an effort or endeavour (*prayatna*) is (an attribute) peculiar to sentient beings. Effort or endeavour (*prayatna*) is a form of knowledge or will that is the cause of stimulating one to exercise the body (the senses and the like). When one is the seat of mere knowledge and of mere enjoyment (*bhoga*), there is only the doership which consists in being the seat of such action as is common to sentient beings and non-sentient things.

(NOTE* *Logical Economy*.—

(Instead of saying that the fragrance of a flower is known to be or is experienced as agreeable and that this knowledge or experience gives rise to pleasure (or *sukha*), we may, as well. say that the agreeable is itself pleasure and is therefore a form or state of knowledge )

When a person is stimulated by his will to act in a particular manner, he becomes the seat of endeavour or effort (*prayatna*) and is a doer of that particular form. It cannot justly be maintained that this form of doership is found only in rendering *kaīnkarya* or service. Even in this case, the man must have adopted an *upāya* with a view to attaining the end called the love of the Lord. If all this is admitted, it is only the doership that takes the form of an endeavour or effort which would lead to bondage — it is only this form of doership that should be avoided. If it be asked what that form of doership is, the answer is as follows:— Iswara has given the *jīva* such qualities as knowledge and ability and also such things as the senses and the body. He supports the *jīva* and stimulates him (to action). He enjoys also the fruit of (that) action. When He is thus rendering help (to the *jīva*), if the latter should consider himself as being different from this and if, even when he considers his position in the right spirit, he adopts an *upāya* for some (worldly) purpose — the endeavour would lead to bondage. Even *bhakti* and *prapatti* would certainly lead to bondage in the case of the man who performs them for securing other ends (than *moksha*). Therefore just like the doership in the state of attainment (*mukti*) of the man who longs for rendering service to the Lord by virtue of his very nature and with no other purpose, the doership in the state when he adopts an *upāya* (for the sake of *mukti* and service) is not improper. The doership of varied forms of service (to the Lord) in the state of attainment (*i. e. mukti*) results from the self s own longing (to render service) combined with the varied desires of the Lord (which have no connection with *karma*). The doership in the state of *samsāra* is of different kinds corresponding to the conditioning factor (*upādhi*) in the forms of *sattvam*, *rajas* and *tamas* which have been evolved in accordance with the past *karma* and by the will of *Īswara*. That doership which results from *rajas* and *tamas* and so also from that *sattva* which is the cause of attachment to other interests (than *moksha*) — that doership leads to bondage. That doership (on the other hand) which results from the form of

superior *sattvam* which creates a longing for he attainment of Bhagavan — that doership leads to *moksha*. In the state of *mukti*, the doership will have no connection at all with any of these three qualities.

Therefore between the texts which state that the self is not a doer and the texts which state that the self is a doer, there is no conflict, since it is possible to discriminate wherein it has doership and wherein it has no doership. If it be asked how this could be understood, the answer is as follows :— The texts which declare that the self is not a doer or agent have, for their purport, the truth that the doership of the self which is dependent on Iswara and on the qualities of *prakriti* (*sattvam*, *rajas* and *tamas*) should not be considered as independent of other (forces). The texts which declare that the self is a doer or agent have, for their purport, the truth that, of the *jnāna* or knowledge and its particular forms called 'desire to perform and effort' which have come to him in accordance with such things as the desire of Iswara, the *jīva* is himself the seat or *ās'raya*. This conclusion has been taught clearly by the *Gītāchārya* Himself in the *s'lokes* beginning with the following — "It is [76]ascertained that when a man does any action with his body, speech or mind, there are five causes that contribute to that action, *viz*, the body, the self, the senses, the vital breath and fifthly Divinity or *daivam*" In that context the Divinity that is called the fifth (cause) is Purushotama When Purushotama stimulates the *jīva* to perform an action, He is called the *kārayitā* or one who causes that action. He is (also) called the *kartā* or doer in regard to those actions like the awarding of the fruit (to the *jīva*) and the creation of the world. When He does not prevent the sentient being from performing an action, He is said to be indifferent. Since He permits it, He is said to be *anumantā* (*i. e.*) one who acquiesces. As Iswara, sometimes, acts like an expert porter who carries a heavy weight to help an apprentice who can carry only a light burden, He is also said to co-operate (with the *jīva*) (*sahakārī*) In such things as the

76. Bhagavad Gita 18-15

creation (of the world), since differences like gods and men are due to the conditioning factor (*upādhi*) of their respective past *karma*, Iswara is declared not to be the doer as stated in the *s'loka*: "The four[77] castes were created by me in accordance with such qualities as *sattvam* that are found in *jīvas* and also with their past *karma*. Though I perform the act of creation, I am not the real cause nor am I tainted by it." Thus from Iswara who has the common and general doership of all things without exception, the *jīva* acquires the power to make an effort and act in accordance with his own will. Therefore it is evident that the *jīva* is fit to be directed to do a thing and the word *vraja* may justly enjoin the performance of an action.

Since the *dharma* called *s'araṇāgati* can rightly be enjoined for performance, just like such things as *bhakti*, the statement of Tirukkurukai Piran Pillan (the foremost of the disciples of Sri Ramanuja) that the good we do for ourselves is like milk that is bought (in the market) and that the good that comes from Iswara is like mother's milk should be understood to mean that we should remember that *bhakti*, *prapatti* and the like result (from the grace of) God and that the *jīva* is solely dependent (on Iswara). (It does not mean that we are not right in performing *bhakti* or *prapatti* and should leave everything to God.)

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS* :—

He who states that the texts which declare *bhakti* to be an *upāya* are only for the purpose of creating faith in *prapatti* is undermining faith in every *s'āstra* without directly appearing to do so.

*Bhakti* as an *upāya* has been compared (by some critics of it) "to water from a sacred river contained in a pitcher but mingled with a drop of liquor". But this comparison or simile would hold good only when egoism is mingled with (*bhakti*). The same condem-

77 Bhagavad Gita4–13

nation would hold good in the case of *prapatti* also, when it is mingled with egoism or *ahankāra*.

It is stated by some that Alavandar begs, in the following *s'loka*, forgiveness for having performed *prapatti* :— " In consideration[78] of my grandfather, Nathamuni, and ignoring what I myself have done, vouchsafe unto me Thy grace." Here Alavandar is not seeking pardon for the *prapatti* which he performed in accordance with the *s'āstras*, on the ground that the performance was an offence. He is seeking pardon for any trace af egoism (*ahankāra*) that might have been present in him and no more than that. If it were for having performed *prapatti*, he should beg the pardon (of the Lord) for having shown reverence to previous *āchāryas*, for this, too, would be an offence, being an action of his. Thus there would be no end to the making of apologies (*anavasthā* (*i. e.*) infinite regress). If it is argued that this second begging of forgiveness is both for itself and for other offences, it might also be argued that the previous performance of *prapatti* is also begging forgiveness for that action and for previous actions. If these fallacious arguments were adopted, it would follow that the ancients, too, sinned in performing *prapatti* and that it was not proper to show reverence to them. So the reverence shown in this *stotra* (by Alavandar) (to his grandfather *etc*,) at the beginning and at the end is either for the purpose of satisfying the requirements of the *prapatti* done here or for removing any defects in the performance. As in this reverence shown to *āchāryas*, in *prapatti* and the like also, the doership that is subject to the will of another (*viz* Iswara) is no fault. There is a (wrong) view that since the doership of the *jīva* is subject (to the will of Iswara), the self has no real doership and therefore if a man knows this real nature of his (that he is not a doer), none of the forbidden actions that might be performed by him will leave any stain on him. This view finds its refutation also (in what has been said so far).

---

78. Stotram 65.

In the *upanishads*, it is stated that the aspirant to *mukti* should be like a child. Some writers argue from this that he might act just as he pleases (doing even forbidden things). 'Being like a child' means 'remaining without revealing his [79]greatness' and this is established in the *sūtra* "Without revealing his greatness) for this fits in with the *vidyā*" (and not behaving in a childish manner.)

(*The Gītā says:—*)

"To those that [80]have not renounced their doership and the fruit of their actions, the fruits of their *karma* will (certainly) follow and they will be of three kinds, what is undesirable, what is desirable and what is partly desirable and partly undesirable. These consequences of *karma* never affect those who have renounced." and "He [81]who, while performing an action, does not think that it is done by him and whose mind has no attachment to the fruits of that action —— he does not slay any one even though he has slain all those that live in these three worlds".— These passages do not refer, as shown in *Gītā-bhāshya* to sins committed deliberately after the renunciation, otherwise they would conflict with many *s'āstras*. Further the word "though he has slain" apply to what is done in a righteous war.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:

The contention that like a potent medicine which is taken now acting like a cure for unwholesome things that may be done in the future, *prapatti* will destroy any sins that might be committed after its performance — this contention is disproved by hundreds of texts in the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* which are directly applicable to the *prapanna* and are not sublated by other texts.

In such *s'lokas* as the following, Manu and others, too, prescribed the conditions under which transgressions may be permitted: "When there[82] is a real fear that want of food might cause death,

79. Brahma Sutras: 3-3-49;
80. Bhagavad Gita: 18-12.
81. Bhagavad Gita: 18-17;
82. Manu: Smriti 5-104.

if a man eats food obtained from wherever it was possible, he will not be tainted by the sin thereof, in the same way as mire does not stain ether (*ākās'a*)" "At a time[83] when there is a fear that want of food might cause death, the man that eats the food obtained by him, whatever the source might be, will not be stained by the sin thereof, in the same way as water does not wet the leaf of the lotus." That this rule applies equally to the man who knows or meditates on Brahman is seen stated in the *Sūtra* which says, "At a time[84] when death is feared (owing to starvation), the man (the man who meditates on Brahman) may eat any food, whatsoever, for the *s'āstras* say so" and this is taught there with the help of an illustration*. Therefore the view that the self is not a doer and that it is entirely dependent (on Iswara) and hence will not be stained by any sins committed after *prapatti* though they are deliberate and that no further *prapatti* need be performed (for their expiation) — this view is opposed to our *siddhānta* (Sri Ramanuja's doctrine).

In this context some (commentators) explain the meaning of *vraja* otherwise ((*i. e.* that it does not enjoin any action) and state that to the aspirant to *mukti*, there is no *upāya* to be adopted except the knowledge of relationship that is learnt from the *s'āstras* to exist between the *jīva* and Iswara. They find support for this view in the following *s'lokas* without comprehending their real purport The *s'lokas* are:- "The self is the property[85] of Bhagavan. He who considers his self as belonging to himself, is a thief of the self. Is there any form of sin that is not committed by him?" "Bhagavan controls[86] all beings in the universe from within the sphere of the sun and He is the ruler over all. He is within your heart and if you have no quarrel with him, you need not go (on a

NOTE*: *ILLUSTRATION*. Ushasti was a seer and when owing to starvation, he feared he might die, he ate the cooked gram given to him by a man of a low caste. But when this fear did not exist, he refused what was offered to him afterwards *viz*. water.

83. ??

84. Brahma Sutras: 3-4-37

85. Mahabharata: Udyoga parva: 42-35.

86. Manu Smriti: 8-92.

pilgrimage) to the Ganga or to *Kurukshetra*" and "Remember[87] always that the Lord is the master, that the self or *ātmā* is His servant and that this relationship exists always by your very nature." This argument is opposed to the natural and self-evident injunction for *bhakti*, *prapatti* and the like. Since listening to *Vedanta* and reflecting on it arise from mere desire, there is no need also to enjoin the knowledge (of relationship) which arises from the *s'āstras*. (' There is no need for the *s'āstra* to enjoin something which a man will do of his own accord). As is well known, it has been established (in Sri *Bhāshya*) that if knowledge which need not be enjoined is called the means of attaining *mukti*, it would be opposed to the injunction ordaining certain things for performance and there would be other objections too; (the injunction made in the *s'āstras* would serve no purpose at all).

If this is admitted, the knowledge of the relationship between the *jīva* and Iswara is indirectly helpful to *all* aspirants to *mukti*, whatever *vidyā* they may adopt. When a man has acquired this knowledge from the *s'āstras*, the question then arises "What is the means or *upāya* for attaining Bhagavan, the Lord of Sri, who is our master and who imparts unsurpassed bliss?" When this question has arisen, the answer is that these means or *upāyas* are certain other forms of knowledge (other than the knowledge of relationship) which are enjoined for the purpose in accordance with each man's competence and they are *bhakti* and *prapatti*. Of these, *prapatti* is the surrender of the responsibility for one's protection along with its auxiliaries as stated in the following passage: "When the question[88] arises : " To whom is this self to be surrendered for protection? the answer is "To Vishnu" In order to show that this *(prapatti)* should be performed with the knowledge of the relationship existing between one's self and Iswara, it was stated that *prapatti is* the knowledge of the relationship. (It does not mean that *prapatti* is merely that knowledge and nothing else). We have

87. Vishnu-tattvam. 88 Ahirbudhnya Samhita: 52–36.

already described at great length the essential nature (*svarūpa*) of this *prapatti*, its auxiliaries and the like (pages 115 — 135).

*TAMIL VERSE:*

"I am the means as well as the end to be attained. The aspirant (to *mukti*) should become subject to me and seek my protection. The *upāya* called *s'araṇāgati* is not the direct means for the attainment. *Sādhanas* or means like *bhaktiyoga* and *karma yoga* are no aids to prapatti; other troublesome *angas* are not required for *prapatti*. I will myself stand in the place of all such means (as are prescribed for attaining the desired fruits). I am the messenger and the master. Seek me as your refuge and be free from all anxiety". So says the Lord and surrounds me on all sides).

## *THE MEANING OF THE WORD AHAM (I) IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE S'LOKA*

Thus in the first half of the *charama sloka*, Sri Krishna enjoins, for a particular person (*adhikārī*), the adoption of that *upāya* (*prapatti*) which is referred to in the first part of *Dvaya* and which has (in itself) the potency of all *dharmas* or rites and, at the same time a peculiar and unique potency of its own which none of them possesses (for it can destroy even that *karma* which has already begun to operate and yield its consequences). He has explained that this *upāya* does not require any special or ancillary *dharmas* on the part of the *adhikārī* and has to be performed only once. In the second half of the *s'loka*, he graciously explains, at length, the fruit to be attained (by adopting this *upāya*), which is (only) briefly indicated by the word *namas* in the second part of *Dvaya*. In the first half of the *s'loka*, Sri Krishna stated that which has to be done by the person or *adhikārī* (seeking *mukti*). In the second half, He states what He, as the Saviour who has accepted the responsibility of protecting, will perform and comforts the man who has done what he ought to do (*ie*) performed *prapatti*.

Here from the first person singular, *mokshayishyāmi* (I) will set Thee free) - (from this) itself, the meaning 'I' is evident. So the use of the word *aham* (I) has the purpose of indicating, by virtue of its meaning, the power of accomplishing what is to others impossible, for this is essential for setting (one) free from all sins. Its purport is this :— "I that bound the offender with fetters and that am destitute of equals and superiors am now full of compassion as the result of a *vyāja* or pretext and am bent on granting him pardon. (When I am thus inclined) there is no one to prevent me. Nor is there any one else who is capable of making him attain freedom (from sins)". This idea is well-known from such passages as the following:— " Bhagavan Vishnu is the[89] giver of *moksha* ". " The *jīvas*[90] have been bound with the bonds of *karma* by the Supreme Being for His *līlā* and they can be liberated from these bonds only by Him. No one else is capable of doing so." In this word *aham* (I), Bhagavan's natural compassion is the superior aiding force and the graciousness of the Lord which results from *prapatti* acts as a subordinate aiding force and His independence and omnipotence, which are irresistible, stand as the foremost and direct agency to dispel all obstacles. If it be asked how, the answer is as follows — "His natural compassion makes Him so gracious as to overlook countless offences in consideration of some slight *vyāja* or pretext. This graciousness accompanied by compassion makes the Lord's independence and omnipotence operate for the removal of all hindrances that stand in the way of *prapannas*. Thus Iswara, who has all the qualities essential for granting freedom from all sins, can act towards that end without requiring any aid. This is the purport of the *aham* or (I) and it amounts to saying " I myself (without the help of anybody else)".

### *THE MEANING OF THE WORD TWĀ (THEE) :—*

The word *twā* (Thee) means: Thou that hast acquired the power of discrimination *(viveka)* necessary to understand the (nature of the) three *tattvas* (reals) *viz.*, *cit*, *acit* and *Īswara*,

89. ?

90. Vishnutattvam. 1-2-10

and hast realised such defects or demerits as triviality and transience which are inherent in such ends of life as wealth and lordship, Thou that art eager to attain the supreme end of life which consists in attaining me, Thou that hast given up all connexion with extremely difficult *upāyas* which have been taught for that purpose, Thou that hast surrendered the responsibility for protecting to me who is the object of attainment and who is capable of removing all obstacles, Thou that having done what ought to be done, hast nothing else to do towards the attainment of the desired fruit

### *THE MEANINGS OF SARVA PĀPEBHYO (FROM ALL SINS) :—*

Having thus referred to the Dispenser of *mukti* who is capable of putting the *jīva* in bondage or out of it and also to the aspirant to *mukti* who is incapable (of any endeavour) and who has surrendered (to the Lord) the responsiblity for his protection, the *s'loka* proceeds to speak of the bonds in the word *sarvapāpebhyo* (from all sins). Sin is the cause of evil and what it is can be understood from the *s'āstras.* 'Evil' means 'becoming subject to what is disagreeable and losing what is agreeable.' Here (in the *charama-s'loka)* sin denotes also acts of merit *(puṇya)* which lead to enjoyment in *samsāra* (which includes *svarga*), for they, too, are to the aspirant to *mukti*, productive of undesirable fruits. It has been said:—"This [91]*svarga* and other such places are, my child, like hell when compared with the abode of the Supreme Being". Thus to the aspirant to *mukti,* even such places as *svarga* are like hell. In the case of the aspirant, therefore, that which leads to *svarga* is, in no way, different from that which leads to hell. That is why the aspirant to *mukti* is enjoined to give up those means which lead to *dharma*, *artha* (wealth) and *kāma* (pleasure), in the same way as he is enjoined to give up sinful actions. Indeed the *S'rutis* and the *Smritis* declare that good deeds and evil deeds are both to be avoided by the aspirant to *mukti,* for it is stated "Giving [92]up

91. Mahabharata-Santi parvam 196-6. 92. Tiruvoymozhi 1-5-10

*puṇya* and *pāpa* of which are both of the nature, *karma* of and which are hard to give up *etc.*"

Thus having denoted, by the word *pāpa* (sins), both *puṇya* and *pāpa*, which are the causes of bondage, the *s'loka* indicates, by the plural of the word *pāpa* (*viz. pāpebhyaḥ*), their being countless. If so, it may be asked what purpose is served by the word *sarva* (all). (The answer is) the word 'all' is used for the purpose of including among the hosts of sins, *avdiyā* or ignorance, the past impressions (*vāsanas*) which create a liking for adverse things, the taste (*ruchi*) for evil things and the contact with *prakriti* or matter both in its gross state and in its subtle state (in *pralaya*), for these are the causes of *karma* and also the products of *karma*. (In the *S'araṇāgati Gadya*), Sri Ramanuja has, in three clauses *chooranikas*, indicated, both explicitly by the words themselves and implicitly from their meaning, those hindrances or obstacles which are referred to in 'all sins'. The three passages begin with '*manovākkāyaiḥ*' (by mind, speech and body).

(A question might arise in this connection):— It is said, "Having [93]administered the affairs entrusted to them by the Lord for a long time and again and again, they reach the end of their *karma* and attain *mukti*, where *jīvas* who were formerly Brahmas, Indras, and Rudras, are enjoying bliss in *Paramapada* (the supreme abode)." (So also) it is said :— "Those[94] that have been appointed (by the Supreme Being) to be administrators should remain here (in the world of *samsāra*) until the expiry of their period of administration". (We find also the following :—) The man who adopts[95] *bhakti* or *upāsana* as the means will have the benefit of the destruction (the fruits of) such *karmas* (*puṇya* and *pāpa*) as have not begun to yield their consequences at the very beginning of this *upāsana*; for (it is said) that there will be delay (for their attaining *mukti*) till the enjoyment is

93 Lakshmitantram : 17–18
94 Brahma Sutras : 3–3–31
95 Brahma Sutras : 4–1–15

completed of those *karmas* that have begun to operate (*prārabdha*). This is applicable even to those who are not administrators. The question may be asked:— "If so, what is the meaning of saying that the Lord will pardon also (in the case of the *prapanna*) those *karmas* which have begun to operate and yield their fruits?" The answer is as follows:— "Even in the case of *karmas* which have begun to bear fruit, if the man who has adopted *prapatti* as the direct and independent *upāya* considers as evil and undesirable those parts which would lead to another birth or (even) another day's existence and grieves on that account, Iswara will give him pardon even in respect of all that *karma*. If the *prapanna* is so impatient as to feel that he cannot bear to live without the immediate attainment of *moksha*, the Lord will, at that very instant, pardon even all that *karma* which has begun to bear fruit so that no trace of it may be left over. Therefore there is no reason why one should not pray for pardon even in respect of that *karma* which has begun to bear fruit (*prārabdha*).

(In the *S'araṇāgati-gadya* Sri Ramanuja says:—) "Pardon all sins without exception, (sins) past, future, and present - committed by the mind, the speech, or the body." Here past (sins) refer to those committed before *prapatti* and future (sins) refer to those that might be committed after the performance of *prapatti*. We do not see any sins committed at the instant of performing *prapatti*. What, then, is the meaning of *present (kriyamāṇa)* sins? (The answer is):— By the word 'present' (*kriyamāṇa*) is meant 'That which was begun before and which will be completed in future? According to this definition, those sins which were begun before and which require a long time for their completion and those that might be done on account of negligence or carelessness at the instant of performing *prapatti* — these are called present (sins) — Future (sins) are those that may begin after *prapatti*. Among those sins which are committed after *prapatti* and which may be partly of the present and partly of the future, those which are not committed deliberately will be pardoned by Iswara and will leave no trace at all (on the self). Those that are

committed deliberately can be atoned for by the performance again of *prapatti*, for it is said:—"If an [96]offence be committed, expiation should be made therefor and the expiation to be made is only the performance of *prapatti* again." When it is said that if Iswara is bent on granting *moksha*, even deadly sins cannot stand in the way, and that there will be no punishment for sins committed deliberately after *prapatti*, what is meant is not that there is no need for expiation or *prāyas'chitta*, but that if Iswara is again propitiated by *prapatti*, (which is the *prāyas'chitta*), *moksha* is sure to follow. It is the result of God's forgiveness that the man is induced to perform expiation by a further *prapatti*.

It has been said (by some *āchāryas*) that, to Iswara, the sins or offences of the *jīva* are (agreeable) like the dirt on the body of a beloved wife and like the slime on the body of the new-born calf to the cow. This only means that even if wicked men should perform *prapatti*, Iswara will not forsake them and will bring them round to righteous ways. It does not mean that sins committed deliberately would give delight to Iswara. If so, the *prapanna* should have, by all the means in his power, to commit such sins.

Even if offences are committed deliberately owing to the peculiar nature of a man's *prakriti*, and even if a further *prapatti* is not performed (by way of expiation), it is the peculiar characteristic of Iswara's forgiveness that He sees to it that such *prapannas* do not go to hell and that He awards them light punishments (sufferings) as (kings do) in the case of their offending sons. Sins lead to sufferings that are seen and that are tangible and also to sufferings like those in hell. So when it is said that there is no hell for the *prapanna* as in the following *s'lokas* :— "Those who[97] consider Vishnu, the bearer of Sarnga, as the supreme end of life and who perform *prapatti* to Him never go to the world of Yama" and "Whatever[98] be the family into which they are born, and

96. Lakshmi Tantram: 17-91†92. 98. ??
97. Vamana-purana: 94 - 43.

wherever they may live, those who are ever attached to Vasudeva never go to hell" — when such statements are made to the effect that there is no hell for them, there is nothing in them to deny that they will not have any sufferings in this life itself (like blindness) Logic cannot repudiate explicit statements (made in the *s'ruti* and the *smrti*). It is idle to say that, even in some of those who have committed offences and who have not repented for them by performing a further *prapatti*, we do not see such visible sufferings as blindness which are stated to be their punishments. Even in their lives, we may see such sufferings as the following in accordance with the seriousness of their offences :— many varieties of suffering due to the three well-known causes (the elements of nature, the body and supernatural powers), dullness of the intelligence required for the Lord's service, the diminution of delight and the absence of it in the enjoyment of Bhagavan, the absence of delight in rendering service to Bhagavan and His devotees, offences against the Lord and His devotees, the censure, the boycott and the like by the virtuous, the destruction of their good deeds, the loss of the esteem in which they were formerly held by good men, the suffering due to the frustration of their ambitions and desires and such other forms of sorrow. It is well-known from the *s'rutis*, the *Dharma s'āstras* of Manu and others and from the *Itihasas*, *Puranas* and the *Pāncharātra* that, for varied kinds of sins of omission and commission, there are varied kinds of visible suffering. Therefore when blindness and the like are taken by way of example, it should be taken only as one instance (and not as an invariable form of suffering). This is evident from the opening words of the sentence which speak of sufferings in the world in general.

It is not possible to argue, with any certainty, that the varied sufferings which come to a man as the fruit of sins committed deliberately after *prapatti* and which find support in the authority of the texts are due to past *karma* which has begun to yield its fruit. These may come as the result of either of the two kinds of *karma*. That is why good men *(sātvikas)* dread offences that

might be committed deliberately. If this were otherwise, it would be opposed to the *s'āstra* which enjoins a further *prapatti* and to the code of conduct followed by virtuous men and to ancient tradition.

(It is true) Nanjiyar stated that if a man does not feel repentant after committing an offence, he should be considered as without knowledge. But what is meant is that his omission to repent is due to dulness of intelligence and not that the *prapatti* was not fulfilled. Deliberate offences which would meet with Bhagavan's disapproval would not be committed by some men as these result from conditions created by past *karma*. In the case of some others who commit such offences, repentance and the like put an end to them. Men of hard hearts may not repent at all. Therefore if deliberate offences happen to be committed, the man should repent and perform *prapatti* again. If he does not, they would lead to light punishments or sufferings in accordance with what is said in the *s'rutis* and the like.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

Wise men who have performed *prapatti* would never think of committing offences deliberately, men of a mediocre intelligence repent (for such offences.) Hard - hearted men meet with punishment for them.

Therefore in order that there may be no punishment of any kind, one should guard against deliberate offences.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

When one performs the commands of the omnipotent Lord (*nitya* and *naimittika karma*) solely for the purpose of pleasing Him, no punishment will ensue, though he may not have thought (of avoiding any such punishment).

If a *prapanna* should try, as much as it lies in his power, to avoid offences, he should avoid even more carefully, offences

against the devotees of Bhagavan and association with those who commit such offences.

*SANSKRIT SLOKAS* :—

The countless and serious sins committed by the man who meditates on Brahman (*Brahmavit*) will be transferred to the man who hates him. Realising this, one should dread committing any offence against a *Brahmavit*.

Even by associating with one who has offended against the devotees of Brahman, a man will incur sins. (At the same time) a man should not hate one who offends against the devotees of Brahman for, by so doing, he takes upon himself the burden of Iswara, who alone is competent to punish him.

*TAMIL VERSE* :—

The Lord, whose will is irresistible and who creates, in the minds of those who do not care for him, all their desires and who also frustrates them — the Lord has turned my mind today from *samsāra* or bondage and has placed me beneath His two feet for protection. He has been pleased to forget His wrath caused by my actions in the past prompted by my mind before the performance of *prapatti* and has appeared already (as *avatārs* and *archā*) to grant me *mukti*. He smiles gently, wondering whether we shall accept His grace today or tomorrow.

### *THE MEANING OF THE WORD MOKSHAYISHYĀMI (I WILL SET THEE FREE)*

The word *mokshayishyāmi* (I will set thee free from (all sins) means " I will grant thee release (from the bondage of *samsāra*) at the time when you want it ".

It may be asked :— " (In another context) the Lord says, " I will never pardon ". Is it not opposed to what is stated here *viz.* " I will set thee free from all sins ? "; therefore this should be merely to give a little seeming confort in words and is not to be

taken literally." The answer to this question is as follows.— " There is no conflict between these two statements for they apply to different cases. " I will not forgive " occurs in the *s'loka* :— " Though a man adores[99] me with a hundred lotuses, O Goddess of the earth, whichever[100] devotee of Vishnu touches blood even unawares I will not pardon him. I will never pardon his offence, O Goddess of the Earth, even if he tries to show me a hundred marks of reverent attention *(upachāra)*". It only means " I will not forgive the man for such trivial forms of expiation (as the offering of lotuses and external marks of attention). Here in the *Charamas'loka*, the word *mokshayishyāmi* (means " I will forgive all (offences) if the man adopts the particular *upāya* which is an atonement for all sins." The intention of the Saviour is expressed indeed in the *s'loka* .— " Be it[101] Vibhishana or Ravana himself, bring him here, O Sugriva ; I will grant him pardon." These words are not seeming-pleasant, for there is no conflict between what is stated (in *Varāhapurāṇam)* and what is stated in the *Gītā*, as they apply to different situations. If they are to be taken as only seeming-pleasant, all the texts in the *s'āstras* which enjoin *bhakti* and *prapatti* would be void of authority.

Here " Releasing from sins " means Iswara giving up His intention to punish the sinner for having violated His commands from beginningless time. By this turning away (of Iswara) from the thought of punishment, the effects of His punishment, such as *avidyā* or ignorance, would all cease to exist. Iswara's turning away from the thought of punishment means His will which takes the form : " By my grace[102] will the man who performs all his duties as for me and as being done by me attain the world that is eternal ". The cessation of such things as *avidyā* in the *jīva* means the expansion of intelligence, knowledge, wisdom and such others.

99. Varahapuranam.

100. Varahapuranam.

101. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda : 18 - 34.

102. Bhagavad Gita: 18 - 56.

The manner and the order in which the causes of *samsāra*, which are of the nature of *puṇya* and *pāpa* will disappear are as follows :— The hindrances to the adoption of the *upāya* have disappeared already by their respective causes (such as the performance of the rites and duties of *varṇas* and *āsramas*), then the *puṇyas* and *pāpas* done before the adoption of the *upāya* which are opposed to the attainment (*of mukti*) will disappear without any trace at the beginning of the adoption of the *upāya*, provided they are not such as have already begun to yield their fruit (*prārabdha*). Among sins committed after *prapatti*, those offences which may be committed without any awareness of them and which are the result of unfavourable conditions of place, time and the like will not in the least taint (the self). Those offences which are committed deliberately when there is no danger of death will cease either by some form of atonement or expiation which is within the man's power or by experiencing the fruit of the *karma* which would be of the nature of a light punishment. That portion of the *karma* which has begun to yield its fruit to the *prapanna* that will have to be experienced within the time desired by him (for *mukti*) will disappear either by the experience or enjoyment of the fruit or by an intervening rite of expiation. That which remains will disappear by the potency of the *upāya* (*prapatti*).

Among those good deeds (*puṇya*) which are done deliberately with thought both (of *moksha* and of *samsāra*), such as are not hindrances and such good deeds (*puṇya*) done before and after the adoption of the *upāya* by the *upāsaka* as are capable of strengthening his *vidyā* or meditation — these will disappear after having yielded their fruit. Those good deeds (*puṇya*) done before and after the adoption of the *upāya* (namely, *upāsana*) which are of no use to the meditation or *vidyā* and which have been prevented from yielding their fruit and those good deeds, done before and after, which are useful for the meditation but which have had no occasion to yield their fruit owing to the superior strength of (other) *karma* favourable for the meditation and unfavourable for it and which still remain without yielding their fruit — these too, will disappear

in the last moments of the man's life. This truth is expressed in the *sūtra* "By [103] the same principle, the deeds, too, which are other than sinful will not stain (the self)." Those good deeds (which are the cause of rain, food and the like which are necessary for the performance of the *vidyā*) will cease to exist immediately after the fall of the body ".

Since those good deeds which were performed solely for pleasing the Lord and which were merely of the nature of service have already yielded their fruit, there is no need to speak about their staining the self. Those deeds which were performed by the man for setting an example to the rest of the world (*lokasangraha*) had to be performed as commands of the Lord. They are of the nature of pure *kainkarya* or service and have already given their fruits. Among them, if any such good deeds were done without the renunciation of egoism (*sātvikatyāga*) out of carelessness, they, too, would amount to sins as stated in the *sloka*— "*Tapas* is[104] no sin, the study of the *Veda* is no sin, the rites and duties prescribed for each man are no sins, nor is the earning of money by hard work for their sake a sin. If these very things are done with a wrong intention with the thought, "I am doing this and doing this for myself", they become sinful". These (sins) will become subject to the release promised in *mokshayishyāmi*. Those *prapattis* that were performed for other ends (than *mukti*) must have already yielded their fruit.

For the sake of the end for which a former *prapatti* was performed, a second or further *prapatti* ought not to be performed, as it would be inconsistant with the potency of *prapatti* and with the intense and great faith with which the first *prapatti* was performed. If one were to perform more than one *prapatti* for the sake of a single end in view, it would be like adopting another *upāya* (and there would be need for atonement).

103 Brahma Sutras: 4-1-14
104. Mahabharata: Adi parva: 1-301

The disappearance or destruction of past *karma* means Iswara's giving up the thought of awarding the person the fruit thereof. When *karma* is said not to stain or taint the self (*as'lesha*), it means that the thought of awarding the fruit or consequence of the *karma* in the case of those who have sought His protection does not even arise in Iswara.

If it be asked · " (It is stated in the *s'rutis* that the good deeds and the bad deeds of the man who is to obtain *mukti* will be distributed among his friends and his foes respectively (at the last moment of his life). If good deeds and bad deeds (or past *karma*) are all destroyed in the manner described above, how can this distribution take place ?" The answer is: The distribution among foes and friends will be, respectively, of those evil deeds which are said not to taint and to be destroyed, (*as'lesha* and *vināsa*) and those good deeds (*puṇya*) which are done deliberately after the adoption of the *upāya* and which have been prevented from yielding their fruit by stronger *karma*. (It is said in the *s'rutis*) that Iswara distributes these among the man's friends and foes at the time of his death. Why should Iswara wait until the time of the man's death for this distribution, when He could as well have done so, at the very beginning when the man adopted the *upāya* ?" The answers to these questions are as follows :— " A man may have behaved with favourable intentions towards the devotee at first, but later he may change and behave with evil intentions. In such circumstances the good deeds should not have already been given away to the friend (who has afterwards turned foe). Further the Lord desires to give opportunities to foes who have done evil to the devotee to beg for forgiveness. These are the reasons why Iswara does not effect the transfer of the good and the bad *karma* until the last moments of the devotee.

The good deeds done by a man for the sake of such ends as *svarga* are, to the aspirant for *mukti*, of the nature of *sins (pāpa)*. Hence such good deeds (of the devotee) will not be transferred to his friend, if the latter is an aspirant for *mukti*.

It may be asked "What is the meaning of transferring the *karmas* performed by one man to some others?" The answer is as follows:— "The punishment or reward which Iswara intended to award to those who performed these *karmas* is now transferred to his foes and friends in equal measure," It may be asked, "If punishments and rewards for the *karmas* performed by one man are to be awarded to some other man or men, would there not be too wide an application *(atiprasanga) (i. e.)* the punishment does not go to the evil-doer but to some body else who has not done evil. It is also against the principle that he who sowed must reap the harvest". The answer is this:— There will be no such unfairness due to too wide an application *(atiprasanga)*, because the rewards and punishments are awarded in accordance with the obligations or offences done, respectively, by these friends and foes to the aspirant for *mukti*. That is why it is nowhere stated that these good deeds and bad deeds are transferred to those who are neither friends nor foes. The word 'transfer' is used here in the sense that (their friends and foes) will have fruits similar to those of the *karmas* said to be transferred. This *s'ruti* which speaks of the transfer of good and bad deeds suggests the extreme of pleasure and displeasure that the Lord would feel, if the obligations and offences are done to the *jnānī* (the man of wisdom) who is extremely dear to the Lord.

If we take the*interpretation given in the *s'loka* (on page 318), *sarva papebhyoh* (from all sins) would briefly include, as desired by the man, all hindrances to the attainment of the Lord, all hindrances to the proper adoption of the *upāya* and also the causes of experiencing disagreeable things.

Here the hindrance to the attainment of the Lord is the Lord's will that the offender shall not enjoy Him. The hindrance to the

NOTE* *This interpretation*:- "If a man is in despair at the thought that he is incapable of performing whatever will produce the ends desired by him, I myself stand in the place of those actions.")

*upāya* is the Lord's will that the offender shall not understand Him aright and do what is necessary to propitiate Him. The causes of experiencing disagreeable things consist in the will of God that the man shall experience the consequences or fruits of doing such *karmas* as displeased Him.

If all punishments are cancelled in the case of the aspirant for *mukti*, the effects of such punishments, namely, contact with *acit* and the like will stand cancelled by the Lord's grace which cancelled the punishments. Thereafter since there are no causes, there will be no such effects as disagreeable experiences. This is indicated in the *sūtra*: "The man who has attained [105]*moksha* will never return to *samsāra*, for the *s'rutis* say so", These conclusions are within the reach of the knowledge of those very wise men who have studied *S'ri Bhāshya* for a long time along with the traditions of the good.

Thus (the words) "I will release thee from all sins" speak of the removal of the stream of all hindrances which are of the nature of either causes (the Lord's will to punish) or effects (*avidyā* and the like); it means the same thing as saying that the self will (then) have the manifestation *(āvirbhāva)* of the perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan. For Bhagavan Sounaka says:— "When the[106] dirt is washed away, the gem shines of itself, but the sheen is not newly produced. In the same way, when the self casts off its blemishes or faults, *jnāna* is not newly created in it (for it is already there). When a tank is dug, water and space are not newly created. What is already present is now brought to manifestation. How can a thing which did not exist before arise anew? So by the casting off of evil qualities, good qualities like *jnāna* shine forth. They are not newly produced, for it has been stated (in the *s'āstras*) that they are eternal qualities of the self". Since the substance called *jnāna* or knowledge and its inherent power to cover all objects are both eternal, the right word to use is 'manifestation' (*i. e.*) it is used in its primary sense.

105. Brahma Sutras: 4-4-22. 106. Vishnudharma: 104 - 55 - 57.

(It is true that) the expansion of *jnāna* or knowledge to cover all objects, the freedom from pain, sorrow, and the like, the will to do what is good and other such things and the forms of service or *kainkarya* arise anew. Still as their origin depends on the conditional factor (*upādhi*), namely, the removal of hindrances thereto, the word 'manifestation' (*āvirbhāva*) is used in such places as:— "May[107] the performance of different kinds of service which are natural to myself *manifest* itself." This is in order to show that when the hindrances disappear, these services will automatically follow. (In the state of *samsāra*), the objects (in the Universe) which are all the glorious possessions of Bhagavan appear disagreeable in various ways or (only) slightly agreeable as a result of the conditioning factor *(upādhi)*, namely, *karma*. In the state of *moksha*, they would all become agreeable (since *karma* has disappeared), as agreeableness is their natural quality. Therefore in that state, too, the word 'manifestation' (of agreeableness) may justly be used. Therefore the words "I will release thee from all sins" make it evident that the self will have a new state in which all things will manifest their natural agreeableness to it.

If the word *ekam* means the identity of the *upāya* and the *upeya* or the end of attainment (as has already been indicated), this attainment of the desired end is also made plain. Therefore the idea that was expressed clearly in the *s'loka* (*Gītā* - 18 - 65), namely "Thou wilt come to me" may be considered to be stated in the *charama s'loka* (also) by the meaning implicit in the word *ekam*, and by the statement that the hindrances to that attainment are destroyed — (I will release thee from all sins). Therefore the *charama-s'loka* cannot be said to supplement or explain what has been stated in the preceeding *s'loka*.*

---

107. Ashtasloki: 3.

NOTE:— The author declares that the *charama-sloka* is not explanatory of the previous *sloka* (*Gita* 18–65) as stated by some who consider it to refer to *bhaktiyoga*. It is independent of the previous *sloka* and concerns itself with *prapatti*.

Here an objection that has no soundness in it may be raised to this effect:— "When it is said "I will release thee from all sins", does it follow from those words alone that the release from sins would lead to the attainment of Bhagavan stated in "Thou wilt reach me?" Is it not possible that, with the removal or pardon of all sins, the self may attain the state called *kaivalyam* in which it enjoys only itself without attaining Bhagavan? That there is a state called *kaivalyam*, has, it is well known, been declared in such treatises as *Nāradīya kalpam*, where we find the *s'loka* :— "This *mantra* enables a man to obtain wealth and lordship in this world, *svarga* and the like in the world beyond, *kaivalya* (the enjoyment of one's own self) and the enjoyment of Bhagavan". Alavandar also says "To those[108] who desire to have wealth and lordship, the enjoyment of their own self dissociated from the body and, likewise, the performance of *kainkarya* or service at the feet of the Lord *etc. etc.*" He says also (elsewhere):- "Without the grace[109] of Lakshmi, the beloved consort of the Lord with the lotus eyes, we cannot have the valuable things desired (by men) in *samsāra*, the enjoyment of the (disembodied) self, (*kaivalya*) and the enjoyment of Bhagavan". In the *Gadya* also, is found quoted (the sentence) in *Jitanta stotra* :— "Leaving all desired pleasures and the enjoyment of the (disembodied) self, I have reached Thy feet." This truth is also stated at length in Sri Ramanuja's *Gītā-bhāshya* and such other writings. Therefore should not the freedom from all sins which results from the statement "I will release thee from all sins" be considered common to *kaivalya* and the enjoyment of Bhagavan?".

The objection (stated so far) is unsound for the following reasons :— "If all sins have disappeared, there is no reason why the self should be without the experience of Bhagavan, which is its natural and inherent right. Therefore the state of the enjoyment of the mere self *(kaivalyam)* without the enjoyment of Bhagavan would not be the goal of attainment then. Hence in

**108. Gitarthasangraha : 12.** **109. Chatussloki : 3.**

that state *(kaivalyam)*, (we should understand that) the *karmas* which produce wealth, and such sufferings as old age and death have disappeared but that the *karma* which is a hindrance to the perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan has not yet been destroyed. This state (of *kaivalya*) is a particular kind of enjoyment which consists in the experience of one's own disembodied self. Of this state it has been said :— "In that[110] experience of the self, the self feels that there is nothing greater than it", and also, "If a man desires[111] this enjoyment of the (disembodied) self, these three (*karma yoga*, *jnāna yoga* and *bhaktiyoga*) will enable him to attain that extreme which is called *kaivalya*". As stated (in these *s'lokas*), this experience in which there is neither contact with *acit* or matter nor enjoyment of Bhagavan and which results from the adoption of a particular *upāya* within the man's ability was called *kaivalyam*, because it is the enjoyment of the *mere (kevala)* self without association with either *acit* or Bhagavan.

(In some places) *mukti* or the attainment of Bhagavan is called by the word *kaivalyam* in order to show that all *upādhis* or conditioning factors have ceased to exist in *mukti*. So also the word *mukti* is sometimes employed to denote the experience of the disembodied self as in the *s'loka* :— "O, Lord of Hastigiri,[112] I look upon all the enjoyments of this world, the title of Brahma, the high position of Rudra, and the experience of the disembodied self, which is called *mukti* — I look upon these as water poured in the soil saturated with salt. I know the bliss of rendering service to Thee". The word *mukti* employed here should be explained as in the *s'loka* :— "The man who[113] is free from desire, fear and anger — he is always a *mukta* (even here in *samsāra*). It only means "He resembles a *mukta*". It may be asked "Is it (*kaivalyam*) not stated to be freedom from old age, and death?" The answer is that it is just like calling the gods immortal *(amara)*, (That is : they are not truly immortal.) Compared

110. Bhagavad Gita : 6 - 22.
111. Gitarthasangraha : 27.
112. Varadarajastava : 81.
113. Bhagavad Gita : 5 - 28.

with human beings, they may be said to be relatively immortal, for they live much longer. Or it may be explained as stating that *kaivalyam* will lead, in course of time, to *mukti*. In the same way should be explained the use of the word *mukti* when it is intended to mean merely the attainment of the same abode or *loka* as that of *the *Vibhavas* or *Vyūhas* and also *sāmipya* and *sārūpya*.

It has been declared (that real *mukti* is different from the others) in the (following) *s'loka*:—" Some live [113A] in the worlds of Vishnu. This is *sālokyam* (living in the same *loka* or world as Vishnu). Some reach near Him. This is *sāmīpyam* (attaining a place near Vishnu). Some others attain a form resembling that of Vishnu. This is *sārūpyam* (having a form resembling His). Others still attain *sāyujyam* and it is this which goes by the name *moksha*". The *sāyujyam* referred to here is going to *Paramapada* and enjoying the same bliss as that of Bhagavan (and this alone is real and true *mukti*). That the experience of the mere disembodied self is not eternal and that it is not real *moksha* are evident from these *s'lokas*:— "There are four kinds[114] of people who are mine and who are called my devotees. Among them, those who are exclusively attached to me *(ekāntins)* are the best, for they worship no other deities. To these men who perform their duties and rites without any attachment or desire for their fruit, I am alone the goal. The other three virtuous kinds of *bhaktas* or devotees are said to be desirous of certain ends. All these (three) are liable to fall (from their high state) but the *jnānī* (who is an *ekāntī* attains *moksha* " (Again it is said):— " Having [115] listened to this story, the man who has lost his wealth will become free from the sorrow due to it; the man *(jijnāsuh)* who wants to enjoy his disembodied self will attain *bhakti* or devotion (to the

NOTE*: He who worships or meditates on the *Vibhavas (avatars)* or *Vyuhas* will, after death, go to the world of the *Vibhavas* or *Vyuhas* in accordance with the principle called *tatkratu*. As he meditates, so will he be "from that world after meditation on the Supreme Being, he will reach *Paramapada*, which is true *moksha*).

113A. Bhagavatam

114. Mahabharata: Santi parva 350 – 33–35.

115. Mahabharata: Santiparva 348-81

Lord), the *bhakta* or devotee will attain *moksha*". This amounts to stating that the *jijnāsuh* spoken of in the *Gītā*, who is desirous of experiencing his self. will, in course of time, become a *jnāni*. It has been said :— " When the[116] attachment to the pleasures of life ceases, the self, which is different from the body and which is happy, will become manifest. Without being caught (in this state) *viz. kaivalya*, if you want to realise that your essential nature consists in being *s'esha* to Bhagavan and in being eternal, get hold of Bhagavan and then give up the pleasures of worldly objects." In this (Tamil verse) the enjoyment of Bhagavan is said to be eternal and the experience of the disembodied self, which is distinguished from it, is indirectly stated to be not eternal. (It is true that) the experience of the measureless self is described as imperishable or without changes like diminution or increase; like the statement of the fruit of the rite called *chāturmāsya* being imperishable; it only means that it will last for a very long time (*i. e.*) many and many a *kalpa* (and not that it is eternal). This locality where the self enjoys itself is thus described :— " The place[119] called the *amritam* of *yogis* is the place to which those who want to enjoy their own self go." That this locality is not *Paramapada* is also evident from (another) *s'loka* in the very same context : " Those who[120] are *yogins* and who, being *ekāntins*, are constantly meditating on Brahman, reach that supreme abode which the eternal *sūris* are gazing at. (It is clear from this) that the *ekāntin* who is desirous of attaining Bhagavan is here stated to go to a place other than that (to which the man who is desirous of enjoying his self would go) and that it is a place gazed at by the *sūris*.

In such treatises as *Srī Bhāshya* (and *Gītābhāshya*) it has been stated that those who meditate on their self with Brahman as its inner self as in *Panchāgni-vidyā* and the like pass (after death) along the *archirādi route* and attain *Brahman*.

116. Tiruvoymozhi ; 1 - 2 - 5.
117. Tiruvoymozhi : 6 - 9 - 10.
118. Tiruvoymozhi : 6 - 9 - 10.
119. Vishnupuranam : 1 - 6 - 38.
120. Vishnupuranam : 1 - 6 - 39,

Therefore to those that *meditate* on their self according to the *Panchāgni vidyā*, there is an intermediate result or experience consisting in the enjoyment of the mere self. However, according to the principle explained in the *madhu vidyā*, they will ultimately attain Brahman. If, however, the meditation is on the self either as associated with *prakriti* or matter or as disembodied or dissociated from matter, whether the self is meditated on in its essential nature (*svarūpa*) or as if it were Brahman, — in all these four cases, as when name (*nāma*) and the like are meditated on (as if they were (Brahman), there is neither the passage along the *archirādi route* nor the attainment of *Brahman* This is declared in the following:— *Bādarāyaṇa* is of [120A] opinion that the *Ātivāhikas* (escorts) lead those who do not meditate on *pratīkas* (*i e.*) parts or aspects (of Brahman). In either of the other alternatives, there is conflict (with the *s'rutis*) and also with the *principle of *tat-kratu*. In another context to prove that the being meditated on in that *vidyā* is (not the *jīva* (but) the Supreme Being or Brahman, the *Sūtrakāra* gives this as his reason for saying so:— "Since the person who meditates according to this *vidyā* is said to pass along the *archirādi route*." This is done in the *sūtra* "since [121]mention* is made of the route meditated on by those who have listened to the Upanishads" *(i. e.)* to those who meditate on Brahman.

Therefore to those who do not attain Brahman, there should not have been the cancellation of all sins spoken of in the *charama*

* NOTE:— If it is said that only those who meditate on Brahman will attain Brahman, it would conflict with *panchagni vidya,* according to which he who meditates on his *self* with Brahman as its inner self will travel along the *archiradi route* (and reach Brahman). If, on the other hand, it is said that those who meditate on (not the cause (*i e.*) Brahman (but) on the effect such as *prakriti*. *nama* (name) and the like, it would conflict with what is stated in *Sad-vidya* Therefore Badarayana expresses his conclusion negatively thus: "The escort leads, by the *archiradi route,* those who do not meditate on parts or aspects of Brahman *pratikas*: From this it would follow that those who meditate on Brahman alone would take the *archiradi route* and also those who meditate on the self but with Brahman as its inner self *Tat-kratu* is the principle which states the truth "As a man meditates, so will he be". So if he meditates on the self alone, he will become the self (and not attain Brahman).

**120A Brahmasutras: 4-3-14. 121. Brahma - sutras 1-2-17.**

*s'loka.* To those whose sins have been pardoned or cancelled, there is no limitation in regard to the enjoyment of Brahman. Thus since in this *s'loka,* the annulment of *all* sins is declared, (we have to understand that) even that particular *karma* which resulted in the experience of the mere self and which stood as a hindrance to the full and perfect enjoyment of Brahman is annulled or cancelled. From this it would follow that what is stated in the previous *s'loka* namely, "Thou wilt attain myself" is declared in this *s'loka* also *mām eva eshyasi.* "Thou wilt attain myself" means 'the full and perfect enjoyment of Brahman'. In order that this perfect enjoyment may happen, the *archirādi* route has to be traversed and a particular region or locality has also to be reached.

It is clear from the *s'āstras* which speak of such things as this route that, from beginningless time, the independent and omnipotent Lord has made it a rule that the full and perfect enjoyment (of Himself) should be granted in this order (namely, the *archirādi* route, the entrance into the region or locality and then the enjoyment).

Before starting on the *archirādi* route, when a man understands the essential nature *(svarūpa)* of Brahman with the help of the *s'āstras* and so also when he has a vision of Brahman with the help of *yoga* and when he reaches such worlds as those of **Vibhava,* the vision or realisation which he gets results from some specific good deeds and is dependent on the instruments of knowledge. Therefore this vision will be partial or limited and liable to interruption. But the vision that results in the state of *mukti* is full and perfect, because there are no factors that limit or diminish the experience nor is it liable to any further interruption or break. As an overflow *(parīvāha)* of this enjoyment arises the perfect service or *kainkarya* in which the *s'eshī* (the Lord) finds delight and this

* *Vibhava*: The *avatars* are called *Vibhavas*. He who meditates on a *Vibhava*, Rama, Krishna, Nrisimha and the like will reach the world or *loka* of Rama, Krishna, Nrisimha and the like. From there, after meditation on the Supreme Being, he will go to *Paramapada*. This is how two scholars of repute explained this passage to me.

idea is expressed in the *s'loka* :— "Though[122] you live for a hundred years, I will always be your servant. Therefore give me orders saying - "Do this in this beautiful place." Here all the successive stages of realisation (or fruit) which are stated (by Sri Ramanuja) in the *(S'araṇāgati) Gadya* in the sentence with the word *pāramārthika* are also implicitly suggested in accordance with the *pramāṇas*.

## *THE MEANING OF MĀ SUCHAH (DO NOT GRIEVE - DO NOT DESPAIR)*

Thereafter the words "Do not grieve" reveal the certainty of what has been stated before ".

There are some (commentators) who hold that "Do not grieve" enjoins something to be avoided. (According to them), if, after a man has performed *prapatti*, he grieved or fell into despair, he would be violating the injunction and the Saviour who is the *upāya* would become indifferent and leave him to look after himself. The man would thus become liable, in their opinion, to this disadvantage or risk. This view is opposed to their own commentary on the sins committed deliberately after *prapatti* and on the words "from all sins". It is also opposed to the texts in the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* which declare that the Saviour will never forsake the man who has sought His protection. Therefore since all causes for grief or despair have disappeared in the case of the man who has adopted this *upāya*, it repeats that there is absolutely no cause for despair and aims at confirming the man's faith.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS :—*

Many causes of sorrow (in the case of Arjuna) like those concerning the destruction of relatives have already been removed by appropriate and excellent teaching. Now the sorrow or despair caused by the thought that the *dharma* or rites enjoined (for *mukti*)

---

122. Ramayana: Aranyakanda: 15 - 7,

are too difficult to perform, that the hindrances to *mukti* are insuperable and that the end in view can be attained only after protracted delay — it is this sorrow that is now dispelled.

(The Lord) intends to say:— After I have taught you this *upāya*, which, without being too hard to adopt for the end desired by you, is also capable of annulling all hindrances that stand in the way and is not liable to cause any (undue) delay in the attainment of that aim — after this has been taught to you, there is no room for despair due to such things as the difficulty of adopting an *upāya*. If you adopt this *upāya*, your welfare is my burden or responsibility and I shall myself be interested in looking after it. If I do not protect you, it will be a reproach to me. You are, as it were, my property or wealth (to look after) and there is no reason why you should grieve ".

The grief that is here put an end to is not the old sorrow caused (in Arjuna's mind) by the thought of killing (his) relatives It is a different kind of grief that has to be consistent with the context. If it be asked how, the answer is as follows :— " The rich qualities[123] that distinguish the nature of the gods lead to *moksha*, the qualities that make for the nature of the Asuras are the causes that lead to bondage ". When the two were thus distinguished, Arjuna was grieved at the thought of what he should do if he belonged to the class of Asuras. Sri Krishna, who understood this, said to him :— " O Pandava ! do not grieve. You are born to attain the rich qualities of the gods ". Similarly here, when (Arjuna) is extremely desirous of attaining the supreme end, he grieves at the thought that the *upāya* taught so far has to be adopted for a long time. and is subject to many hindrances, while being extremely difficult of performance even for those who are very careful. At the thought of that *upāya* and of his own (want of) capacity for adopting it, he grieved, saying to himself :— " How can I succeed in adopting this *upāya* and secure the end in view ? " To Arjuna who was in despair (at this thought), Sri Krishna shows

123. Bhagavad Gita : 16 - 5.

another *upāya* which can be duly performed in a single instant, which is without any obstacles, and which is (also) easy of performance. By doing so, He makes Arjuna care-free and certain in regard to the attainment of the desired end and then says, " Do not grieve ". So the words should certainly be understood as intended to dispel the despair due to such things as the difficulty of adopting the (former) *upāya*. (It is only this grief that is here put an end to and no other).

In this *Bhagavad Gītā*, the *Gītāchārya*, at first, imparts a knowledge of the difference between *prakriti* (matter, the body) and the soul or self; then He describes *karma yoga* and *jnāna yoga* which are indirect means leading to *moksha*; thereafter He teaches *bhakti yoga* with its *angas*, which has been enjoined as the direct means of attaining *moksha* and says:— " Thus[124] has been taught to you the *jnāna* which is the most secret of all secrets. Consider all these and then do what you desire to do ". Though He perceived the dissatisfaction that passed over Arjuna's face at that instant, Sri Krishna did not at once favour him with instructions concerning the easier *upāya*, for it has been said: " The Lord of [125]the world tests the minds of those who are weak of heart ". Instead of declaring the final conclusion by saying :— " This is the direct means of attaining *moksha* and is supremely good to you. Act in accordance with this." — instead of saying so, he says :— " Do whatever you wish to do," as if He were indifferent (and not interested in Arjuna's spiritual welfare) like one who tells a traveller, " This [126]route leads to the land of the Vidarbhas and this other to the land of the Kosalas. (Take whichever you choose)". Sri Krishna makes others think that this is the cause of Arjuna's mental depresssion and enjoys the *līlā* of instructing him once again in the principal means of attaining *moksha viz.*, *bhakti yoga*. He begins by stating :— " I will teach you again this greatest secret of all ", and in two *slokas* explains

124. Bhagavad Gita : 8–63 125. Vishnu–dharma : 74–89.
126. Mahabharata : Aranya parva - Nala's words to Damayanti:

to him, conclusively and with deep earnestness, what it is, so that he may remember that it is just what has already been taught. On seeing that Arjuna's depression has become twice as great as before, the Supreme Ruler, who is (now) the Charioteer, feels that Arjuna is now in a state of fitness to receive instruction in regard to the means of attaining *moksha (viz. prapatti)* which is the supreme secret and is, at the same time, extremely easy of adoption. Without the least delay, even without prefacing that *upāya* with any praise, the Lord immediately teaches him to perform *s'āraṇāgati* towards Himself. Thus acting as the Charioteer also to the chariot of Arjuna's mind, *(i. e.* to all his aspirations), the Lord dispels all his griefs. That the grief which is here put an end to is therefore different from the old grief concerning the destruction of his relatives *etc.*) thus becomes clear after a careful consideration of the context (in which the words occur).

In the first half of this *s'loka*, since (the Lord) says to the man who is destitute of all other *upāyas*, "Take refuge under me alone," the man who is incapable (of making any endeavour) surrenders the resposibility (of his protection) into the hands of One who has the ability. Further the independent and omnipotent *S'eshī*, who is compassionate, accepts the responsibility. Therefore (in the first half of the *s'loka*), the *prapanna* becomes free from all responsibility in regard to his own protection. And since the *S'eshī*, who is omnipotent and is ever truthful towards those who have sought His protection, has accepted the responsibility and is so gracious as to say .—" I will release you from all sins", there is absolutely no likelihood of any evils like hell ensuing in the future. Freedom from fear results from this *s'loka*, as also freedom from all doubt, because these are the glorious and true words of Sri** Ranganatha Himself, who is ever truthful.

(**NOTE: Here the reference is to the words of Sri Ranganatha as recorded in *Saranagati Gadya :* "Therefore be free from all uncertainty about the attainment of knowledge concerning myself, about having a vision of myself and also about the attainment of myself)."

Therefore, if one has been told about this special *upāya* and if one adopts it, one will have no grief or despair, at all, in connection with that *upāya*.

Here it may be asked :— From the words "Do not grieve", it is evident that grief (at one's being without *upāyas*) makes one competent for *prapatti*; how then could it be stated that *fear* is also one of the marks of competency for *prapatti*, as shown in the following *s'loka* :— "I dread[127], O, best of gods, at the sight of this *samsāra* which fills me with fear. Save me, O Lord of the lotus eyes. I know of no other *upāya* than Thee", and in the Tamil verse :— "Embrace [128]this red-hot iron pillar, O, sinner"; in dread at these words, I have come and sought Thy feet for protection." To this question the answer is as follows :— Having realised that the end desired by him has not been so far attained, the man grieves; he is also afraid at the prospect, in future, of formidable obstacles to the end desired by him. Therefore (he has both grief and fear). In the case of the aspirant to *mukti*, when either of the two *viz.*, the annulment of what is undesirable and the attainment of what is desired is mentioned, the other also comes (to the mind). In the same way when either of the two marks of competency for *prapatti*, *viz.*, grief and fear, is mentioned, the other is also taken for granted. In the man who is absolutely without *upāyas* (and is therefore fit for performing *prapatti*), these two, grief and fear, are excessive. Therefore by way of conclusion, this *adhikārī* who is overwhelmed with excessive grief is taught the *upāya* which is appropriate for him, and is thereby made free of all doubt, free from all responsibility (concerning his protection), free from all fear and thus delighted at heart. On this extreme fear, we have already stated as follows :— "The Lord has came[129] - the Lord who said :— "Thou that art afraid of *samsāra*, come and seek protection from me".

127. Jitanta stotram : 1-8
128. Peria Tirumozhi: 1-6-4
129. Tirucchinnamalai : 8

The *prapanna* who has done what he ought to do *(i. e )* *prapatti*, should (continue) to perform the rites and duties (ordained for his *varṇa* and *ās'rama)* (*nitya* and *naimittika)*, which are among the *kainkaryas* done by the virtuous : such *karma* as is described in the following *s'loka* :— " Do that[130] *karma* which, when performed, does not yield any fruit and which, when omitted, will bring in *evil*." This is evident from the passages which are found before and after this *s'loka* and also in this very *s'loka*, where it is said that the omission will cause evil. Therefore since (the *prapanna*) has no uncertainty concerning the attainment of the desired end, since he has nothing further to do for the sake of *moksha*, since what he has yet to perform is only the keeping of (the Lord's) commands for their own sake, and since, if offences should be committed (there-after), they could easily be atoned for by repentance and the like as pointed out in another chapter — there is no reason why he should not feel delighted at heart. Though this delight is mingled with disgust (*nirveda*) in the intelligent *(prapanna)* who is still connected with such unwholesome things as the body, yet the two may exist without any inconsistency as the disgust and the delight are due to different factors respectively.

The words " Do not grieve " are, themselves, an indication of the cancellation of all causes of grief; even that portion of the *karma* which has already begun to operate (*prārabdha*) and which will cause grief will be cancelled and the man who is so impatient as not to be capable of existing even for a moment longer will attain *moksha* at that very instant. As stated in the Tamil verse: " The Lord is[131] one who, to those that seek His protection, grants Vaikunta at the time of their death ", we have to believe that all that unexpired part of the *karma* which has already begun to operate *(prārabdha)* will be annulled and that *moksha* will be at the death of this body. Therefore if, in this bodily existence itself, it be felt by a man ) that what remains of this life is an evil, it will also

130. Lakshmi-tantram : 17. 131. Tiruvoymozhi : 9 - 10 - 5.

certainly be cancelled by the will of the omnipotent Lord whose grace has been secured by *prapatti*.

(In this connection it may be asked whether it is not a sin to desire to die immediately after performing *prapatti*). The answer is as follows:—)

*SANSKRIT S'LOKAS*:—

In some forms of expiation for sins *(prāyas'chitta)* and likewise, in certain kinds of offering (made in the fire) like *sarvasvāra karma*, it is not considered a sin if the man gives up life (by casting the body down a precipice or in the fire), So also there is no impropriety in praying for instant death in the *s'araṇāgati* of the *prapanna* who cannot bear to continue in *samsāra* even for a moment *(ārta)*. On the other hand, the *prapanna* who desires to live a long life *(dripta)* commits an offence, if he violates the rule in the *s'āstras* which enjoins the protection of one's own life.

In the same way as *yogis* cast off their bodies in virtue of certain *yogas* practised by them, there is nothing to prevent the man who, while performing *prapatti*, longs to die immediately. It cannot be said that such casting off of the body is not permitted to those who are in Kali yuga, like entrance into holy waters for giving up one's life there. In fact the *ārtha prapanna* who prays for immediate death is one who saves his self sooner than all others.

*Prapannas* are spoken of as belonging to two classes *ārtas* and *driptas* on account of the difference in the intensity of the grief felt by them respectively, (It should not, therefore, be thought that the latter *viz.*, the *dripta* has no grief. The *dripta prapanna* is one who grieves at the thought of another *janma* and believes that he will some day or other attain *moksha* and has the patience to wait until the end of this existence. The word *dripta* is here used not in (the usual) sense of one who has arrogance or pride, which is a quality opposed to the virtues of the soul and leads one to treat good men with disesteem. The word *Ārta-prapanna*

is used here to denote the man who, in this life, looks upon even Brahma's position of lordship as an obstacle to the perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan, who feels that his present association with the body is unbearable as with a raging fire, and who, therefore, cannot endure existence even for a single moment after the performance of *prapatti*. He is, therefore, like one who prays, "Be pleased[132] to make my body and my life-breath perish." He is not the *ārta* referred to in the *Gītā* (7 - 16) "*Ārtho, jijnāsuh, arthārthī, etc.*," where *ārta* means "one who prays for the recovery of his lost wealth or lordship"

There are some who are of opinion that, in Sri Rama's words:- "Whether [133]the man is an *ārta* (who cannot bear delay in the attainment of the desired end) or a *dripta* (who has no such impatience), the man who seeks refuge should (always) be protected", there is *ativāda* or exaggeration in that even the *dripta* who is proud or arrogant is stated to be worthy of protection. Whatever that may be, there is no room for dispute in regard to this passage where *moksha* is promised to the man who grieves for the evils of *samsāra* but can bear to live till the end of this life and then attain *moksha*, for he is not one who is proud or arrogant.

The use of the future tense in *mokshayishyāmi* (I will release you) is not inappropriate in the case of the *ārta* who prays for immediate release from the body, for the end desired is to come *after* the adoption of the *upāya* and the word is used at the time when the *upāya* is taught (*i. e.* before the adoption of the *upāya*).

These classifications into *ārtas* and *driptas* arise on account of differences in the intensity of the Lord's grace which are due to the differences in the good deeds performed by them before.

Such statements as are made in the *ślokas* :— "The man[139] who has performed *prapatti* after learning the truth experiences,

132. Tiruvoymozhi: 10–7–9 133. Ramayana: Yuddhakanda: 18–28.
139. ?

in this life, the consequences of his *prārabdha karma* alone (*i e.*) that *karma* which has begun to yield its fruit in this life, and thereafter attains *moksha* " – such statements do not apply to the *ārta*. (Sri Ramanuja) has described what the *driptaprapanna* should do after the performance of *prapatti*, in his *gadya*, in the passages beginning with :— " You will be[140] free from all trace of suffering or hindrance caused by the body, the elements (earth, water, fire, *etc.*,) or the gods " and ending with " Be free from all uncertainty in regard to knowledge concerning me and the vision and the attainment of myself ".

The freedom from grief that is stated here (in the *charama-s'loka*) has no limiting factors. Therefore the causes of all forms of grief are stated here to be annulled for the man who has a knowledge of this *upāya* and adopts it. By the teaching given here, mere knowledge (of the *upāya*) may exist without its adoption, but it would be of no use at all as stated in the *s'loka*. " The song[141] does not regulate (the actions of) the man though he may sing it very often. Creatures behave in accordance with their past impressions (*vāsana*) like the bird* ' Kulinga ', which, though it utters the words *mā sāhasam kuru*, (Do not behave rashly), continues to behave rashly ". So in this *s'loka*, it is implied that annulment of grief would be the fruit of a combination of both knowledge and action.

Therefore, here, all grief or despair that might arise in regard to the adoption of the *upāya*, whether before its adoption or after it, or in the middle of it — all this grief is here (said to be) annulled.

If it be asked how, the answer is as follows ;— Despair may arise in many forms ;— (1) in regard to one's competency for the *upāya*, (2) in regard to (the potency of) the *upāya* itself, (3) in

140. Saranagati gadya. 141. Mahabharata: Sabhaparva : 42-21.

(*NOTE) Kulinga : a fabulous bird whose cries are said to resemble the words *ma sahasam kuru*. The bird, however, attempts to snatch the flesh from between the jaws of the lion.

regard to the things that the *prapanna* should do after *prapatti*, and so also (4) in regard to the end to be attained including the full and perfect service or *kainkarya* to be rendered. (1) Among them, this *dharma* called *s'araṇāgati*, which is to be adopted, is not confined to any particular family (*jāti*) caste or *ās'rama*. Provided there are the desire for attaining the end in view and faith in the *upāya* which is the means for that attainment and such things as knowledge of one's being destitute (of other *upāyas*), there is no reason why any one should despair at the thought that he may not be competent (to adopt the *upāya*).

(2) The (*sādhya*) *upāya* (*prapatti*) is capable of being performed or adopted in a single instant with all its accessories, it is easy of performance; it does not need to be repeated; it does not take long to bear fruit; its accessories are not difficult; it is capable of yielding the desired fruit just at the time when it is desired; therefore to the man who is destitute (of other *upāyas*) and who is afraid of delay (in attaining the desired end), there is no reason for despair at all thinking that he may have to adopt other *upāyas* like *bhakti*, which have to be practised for a long time with all accessories thereof, which are difficult of performance even to those who are very careful and whose accessories are also equally difficult to accomplish and which yield the desired fruit only after a long time.

The Saviour who is propitiated by this easier *upāya* and who is to grant the desired end is easily accessible to all, inspires confidence, is supremely compassionate and is independent and omnipotent without subjection (to any one else). Therefore there is no reason why one should despair at the thought of the *Siddhopāya* (the Lord).

(3) After the performance of this *upāya*, none of the good deeds that may be done by a man either by way of keeping the commands (of the Lord) or winning His approval is an auxiliary or *anga* for *prapatti*. Therefore even if, owing to adverse circumstances of place and time, there are short-comings in their perfor-

mance, there is no reason for grief or despair at the thought that these shortcomings might adversely affect the accessories (for they are not its accessories).

If, in dread of certain sins due to *prārabdha karma* which render a man absolutely unfit for all *karma* like a piece of burnt cloth, by causing a man to offend the great devotees (of God) deliberately, if, in such cases, the man desires at the time of the first *prapatti* that his actions after *prapatti* should be free from all such offence or if he performs a later *prapatti* for avoiding these offences — if he does these, there is no reason for grief or sorrow at the thought that offences may happen to be committed in future. Even if, at the time of the first *prapatti*, one has not prayed for a later life free of all offence, in case offences are committed deliberately, the Saviour of those that have no (other) refuge who stated, " I will never forsake[142] the man who comes to me in the guise of a friend " will create repentance in his mind, and induce him to perform expiation or *prāyas'chitta* which (in this case) is a further *prapatti*. If the man is too stubborn to feel repentant, (the Lord) will cause sufferings by way of punishment and thus prevent him from committing further offences. Thus before the time when the attainment of the desired end is prayed for the expiation will be over. Therefore the *prapanna* need not feel grieved at the thought that great sufferings like those of hell would come to him as a result of deliberate offences committed by him which flash like lightning and disappear quickly.

(4) Since the *ārtaprapanna* will have the desired end at the very time of performing *prapatti*, there is no reason why he should feel grieved at the thought that the body which resembles hell would continue, (for the body has been thus described) :— " If a man[143] is fond of his body constituted of flesh, blood, pus, foecal matter, urine, muscle, fat and bone — then he should be fond also of hell ".

142, Ramayana : Yuddhakanda : 18-4. 143. Vishnupurana : 1-17-63

As for the *dripta prapanna* :—

All rites or *dharmas* of renunciation such as *karmayoga* will never be in vain as stated in the *s'loka* :— "The beginning[144] that has been made in this *karma-yoga* will never prove futile. There is no harm in its being left incomplete; even a fraction of it saves a man from the great fear of *samsāra*" "The foundation that is laid is, as it were, a foundation of stone" and especially with regard to the man who has performed *s'araṇāgati*, it has been stated: "I will never forsake him." Further the *dripta prapanna* is certain of attaining what he desired, though it is delayed until the time specified by him. So the *dripta prapanna* has no reason to feel grieved at the thought that the good deed in the form of *prapatti* might be counteracted by certain evil deeds which might be thought capable of doing so, as has been said in the *s'loka* "A *yajna* [145]performed by one loses its effect by untruthfulness, *tapas* perishes by arrogance, age becomes diminished by contemptuous talk of Brahmins and gifts of charity lose their virtue by their revelation." Since he has prayed for *moksha* at the end of this life, he has no reason to feel grieved at the thought that, owing to certain *prārabdha karma* ( which has begun to yield its fruit ), he might have to take another birth.

Since he is a *prapanna* for no other object ( than *moksha* ). all his sins which might act as obstacles will be absolved; therefore he has no reason to grieve that the supreme end desired by him would suffer delay owing to such hindrances as the enjoyment of his mere disembodied self.

The Lord intends to say :— "You have become the recipient of my grace which can cancel the causes of all forms of grief. So if, hereafter, you should entertain grief or despair, it would be as foolish as when you had no grief or despair before performing *prapatti*, while being subject to punishment by me. This grief or despair is not in keeping with the peculiar potency of this *upāya*,

144. Bhagavad Gita 2-40 145. Manu Smriti: 4-237

with my glory as *Siddhopāya* who has accepted the responsibility of protecting you and with your state as one who has done what he ought to do by the surrender of all responsibilities to me." In their last moments *āchāryas* teach their good disciples the purport given above of this last sentence, *mā s'uchah*, "Do not grieve", which is the quintessence of the *charama-s'loka* (the last *s'loka*).

Among the words of this *s'loka* (*charamas'loka*) are expressed explicitly by the words themselves or suggested implictly by their meaning, the following ideas concerning this *upāya* : (1) the person who is competent for it, the preliminary condition of being destitute (of all other *upāyas*), the needlessness, for it, of any auxiliary rites which are too difficult to perform, the inappropriateness of trying to perform actions which are beyond one's power, the futility of obstinately attempting to do what is impossible (for one) this *upāya* being such as will not tolerate (the adoption of any other *upāya*); (2) the Saviour who alone can be of use to the aspirant for *mukti*, the Saviour's being perfect and full in such qualities as accessibility and good nature; the Saviour being the teacher of what is most salutary (*hita*); the end of attainment (*viz.* the Lord) being Himself the means of attainment; His being capable of acting in all matters without being hindered (by any one) and without the aid of any one else; His expecting a mere pretext (or *vyāja*) for protecting (one): His not requiring the intervention of any other *upāya*: His being capable of being propitiated without any other auxiliary rites; His being the Saviour who can grant whatever fruit is desired; His intolerance of the acceptance of any other protector; His being ever in the company of Sri (or Lakshmi); His capacity for being placed in the position of other *upāyas*; His readiness to accept the responsibility or burden (of protecting one); (3) the *Sādhyopāya* which is of the nature of the surrender of responsibility; its ancillaries; its being within the competency of every one; its requiring to be performed only once; its being easy of performance; its capacity to bear fruit without delay its being potent enough to annul *prārabdha karma*; (4) the man who

performs *prapatti* being a doer or agent subject to the Supreme Self; his being subject to the authority of the *s'āstras*; (5) The Saviour's supreme compassion; His being ever gracious; His independence and freedom from subservience to any one else; His being irresistible; His not requiring any other aid, His waiting for a pretext (to protect the *jīva*); (6) the *prapanna* being one who has done what he ought to do; the absence, on his part, of any need to do anything else (than *prapatti*) in regard to the *upāya* adopted by him or the fruit expected from it; his being extremely dear to Bhagavan; (7) the many obstacles (to *mukti*) past, present and future; and the varied nature of the different groups of obstacles, their being capable of annulment by the mere will of Iswara, the time of this annulment being dependent on the will of the *prapanna*: the nature of the annulment of these obstacles; (8) the manifestation of one's real and essential nature *(svarūpa)*, which is different from the mere enjoyment of one's disembodied self; the full and perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan; service of all kinds; freedom from coming back (to *samsāra*); (9) the manifold causes of grief or despair before (the performance of *prapatti*), the freedom from such grief or despair after (its performance); freedom from all uncertainty, at all times of reflection; freedom from grief, freedom from fear, a peculiar delight, biding the time when the body will perish and the delight in the performance of service free from offence; these are the principal ideas (suggested) along with other things required for them.

## *A SUMMARY OF THE MEANING OF THE CHARAMA S'LOKA:—*

*'This is the sum and substance of the meaning of the s'loka:-*

" Your knowledge is limited; your ability is insignificant; your life is short and you are also impatient of delay. 'Therefore do not go about seeking other *upāyas* which you cannot (fully) understand, which you cannot easily adopt and which can bear fruit only

after much delay. Realise that I who am easy of access to all, who am the Saviour of all the worlds, and who am endowed with all the attributes essential for a Saviour, am the only *upāya* and perform the surrender of the responsibility of protecting your self to me with its five *angas*. When you have adopted this *upāya*, you will have done what you ought to do, you will become my ward and be extremely dear to me. Supremely compassionate and gracious, independent and omnipotent, I will, myself, by my mere will and without any other aid, and for the fulfilment of my own purposes, free you from the manifold, endless, and insurmountable groups of obstacles without leaving any trace of them. I will enable you to have enjoyments similar to mine own, since you will enjoy myself and all that belongs to me. I will find delight in making you render all forms of service in all places, at all times and in all circumstances — service which will be of the nature of the overflow of the full and perfect enjoyment (of myself). You have absolutely no cause for grief."

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :

This path *(prapatti)* has been disclosed (to us) by *āchāryas* who resorted to that unique *dharma (Siddhopāya)* which can grant all (desired objects) and which is ever accompanied by Sri and who (by so doing) became free from (all) grief.

*TAMIL VERSE* :

Giving up those *dharmas* which have to be performed with extreme care, we were convinced that the true refuge for us is the feet of that Gopala which are fragrant with *tulasī* and we resorted to them at once. By the gracious and fascinating words of that Supreme Person, we have become free from ignorance so that the *karma* which has been separated from us can never follow us.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

There are some (*āchāryas*) who have understood the noble and charming *s'loka* uttered by Hari which is like the gem *koustū-*

*bha* taken out of the ocean of Vyasa's Veda *(Mahābhārata)*. Its meaning finds confirmation in the ways of the world (*or* the *smritis*) and in the paths of the Vedas. On hearing the words of these *(āchāryas)* which are like steps in the staircase that leads to the mansion of *mukti*, great souls like Vaisampayana and Sounaka nod their heads (in approval and admiration).

*Here ends the third part of Srimad Rahasyatrayasara called "The Interpretation of the meaning of the three rahasyas or mysteries by a study of the grammatical construction of the words and sentences in them".*

# PART IV

# THE PATH OF SPIRITUAL TRADITION

## 30. THE CHAPTER ON THE DUTIES OF AN ACHARYA.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:—

The noble *āchārya*, who longs to attain the primeval and heavenly abode of Vishnu, lights up the imperishable lamp of spiritual tradition (*sampradāya*) in some deserving disciple who has been tested in various and well-known ways and found fit (to receive the light). (He lights up this lamp) with true affection (*sneha*) when the disciple is in a state of mind (*das'ā*) free from unworthy qualities* (*guṇa*) like a well-tested and well-burnished vessel with oil (*sneha*) poured into it and with a wick (*das'ā*) made of pure threads (*guṇa*).

### *TO WHOM SHOULD THE ĀCHĀRYA IMPART SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE*:—

It has been said:— "Thou[1] art the Father of this world consisting of things that move about and things that do not move. Thou art also its *guru*; therefore, Thou art the greatest of those who deserve to be worshipped." and again, "We request[2] permission of all (those who are assembled here) to show our reverence to Sri Krishna who deserves, in virtue of the perfection of all his (good) qualities, the foremost tokens of reverence, and who is (at the same time) the *āchārya*, the Father, the *guru* and one fit to be honoured." As stated in these *s'lokas*, the Lord of all is the Supreme *Āchārya*. From Him has come down to us the spiritual

(*NOTE:— The words *guna*, *sneha* and *dasa* have each two meanings respectively:— 1. good qualities and thread; 2 affection and oil; 3. state and wick)

1. Bhagavad Gita: 11 - 43.

2. Mahabharata: Sabha parva: 41 - 21. (Sahadeva's words to the assembled princes at the end of the Rajasuya sacrifice).

tradition of noble *āchāryas*. The (true) *āchārya* collects together the meanings of the three great secrets (*mantras*) whose delightful flavour cannot, like the milk of the lioness, be appreciated by strangers. He makes a brief summary of them and then meditates on them. (How and to whom, after doing so, he should teach these truths is described in the following *s'lokas* :). "He who[3] guards this meaning from those who are unworthy and imparts it to those who are worthy — he is fit to be honoured by me." "This (*the Bhagavad Gītā*) is not[4] to be taught to those who have not performed *tapas*. It should never be taught to the man who has no devotion or *bhakti* and who does not show eagerness to learn it. It should never be imparted to the man who hates me. He who teaches this greatest of secrets to my devotees will show *para-bhakti* or deep devotion to me and will attain me. There is no doubt of this." "This great[5] *s'āstra* should not be taught to men who are not constantly repeating the *Vedas*. This *s'āstra* will impart wisdom to the man who is eager to learn it and bows devoutly to the *guru* for attaining wisdom. This should not be imparted to the man who is ever in the habit of telling lies; (it should not be imparted) to deceitful men, to eunuchs, to men that are mentally perverse, to those who are so conceited as to think that they are learned when they are not truly so, and to those who cause affliction to others I will tell you of the man who deserves to be taught (this *s'āstra*). Listen. It should be taught to the man who has faith, who is virtuous, who never indulges in vilifying others, who can understand sound reasoning and who is capable of grasping what is taught. (It should be taught) to the man who performs the rites and duties (ordained for him) and who endures the inconveniences and discomforts arising from their performance, to the man who is intent on doing what is good to the world and who desires to live in solitude. (It should be taught) to the man who delights in the injunctions of the *s'āstras*, who dreads vain argumentation and who has learnt much from *āchāryas*. It should be

3. Satva samhita : 25 - 375-
4. Bhagavad Gita : 18 - 67 - 68.
5. Mahabharata ; Santi parva : 313 - 32 - 38.

taught to the man who is grateful for the help rendered to him, who considers patience and compassion as desirable virtues and who looks upon all eternal souls as resembling himself. Wise men declare that this *s'āstra* should not be taught to those who have not these virtues. When the *s'āstra* is imparted to the unworthy, it will not bring good to the teacher for that very reason. Even if this earth is filled with gems and offered (to one), one should not, O king, impart this *s'āstra* to the man who has not subjected himself to discipline. This noble *s'āstra* may certainly be taught to the man who has subdued his senses. You need not be, in the least, afraid, O Karala. You have been taught this *s'āstra* treating of the Supreme Brahman. You have been taught the Supreme Brahman that has no beginning, no middle and no end, that is free from sorrow and that is most holy." "If a fit [6]disciple cannot be found, the man who is fit to teach this *vidyā* may (even) die with his *vidyā* or learning. It should, on no account, even at the time of great adversity, be sown in a desert". "Ignorant[7] men who consider themselves learned and hypocrites who pretend to observe *dharma* while they are really doing *adharma* — these man under the disguise of the virtuous harass (good) men who practise *dharma*. He who has skill in performing well such actions as would lead to *moksha* but who, elsewhere, follows the ways of the world — he is looked down upon as a *guru* of a low type. Many are the men who are foolish; the man with a clear intelligence may occasionally be found somewhere and only one among many. He is a man with a virtuous mind who will never allow his intelligence to be clouded by men that are silly. Trust should never be placed in any man; this is a matter for careful consideration, especially, in Kali yuga. Great sinners confound the intellects of the weak-minded with perverse reasons spouted forth like a downpour of rain. One should guard *dharma* from the unfit and perform *dharma*. Never teach anything to one who does not beg for it. Even when asked, secret meanings or the mysteries of religion and the true doctrine should

6 Manu Smriti: 2–113

7 Sandilya Smriti: 4–251–258

not be revealed (lightly). To him who has sought one, with true devotion, who has constant faith in the *s'āstras*, who is pure and is prepared to learn in accordance with the rules — to him one should teach everything. The man who teaches the *s'āstras* to the unworthy for winning the respect of others, for wealth, for being honoured by others and for getting rid of the suffering (caused by poverty) — that man strays from the right path. (You) may sow the seed in a desert, give (your) daughter in marriage to a eunuch and give a garland of flowers to a monkey; but (you) should never impart (instruction) in the *s'āstra* to one who is unworthy". " This great *mantra* should not be taught[8] to an atheist, to one who is insincere, or who is not devout, to one who delights in harassing others and to a miser. This *mantra* is not fit to be taught to such as these. It should be taught by the *āchārya* to the man who is sincere, to one who has devotion to his *guru*, to the man who has devotion to Vishnu and who is intent on doing good to all beings. These two things should be borne well in mind." " Thus [9]have I uttered words which are like a garland to the Lord and words that would delight His servants, for the sake of the enjoyment of the Lord which is sweet as ambrosia". "Here have I [10]taught deep truths in the form of verses each of which begins with the last word of the previous verse (*antādi*). Considering their great value, receive them without casting them among the unworthy". As stated in such treatises as the above, *viz*, *Sātvata*, *Bhagavad Gītā*, the discourse between Vasishta and Karala, Sandilya Smriti and Satyaki tantra, the ancient *āchāryas* would teach only to those who had such qualities as goodness and faith and who would therefore be approved of by the Saviour. (They would teach these truths) only to those who were of the nature of the gods (*Devas*) as described in the following *s'lokas* :— "These [11]are the qualities, O. Bharata, which enrich man with a nature similar to that of the gods :— fearlessness, a mind free from the taint of *rajas* and *tamas*, meditation on the essential nature of the

8 Satyaki tantra
9. Tiruvoymozhi:9-4-9
10. Nanmugan Tiruvandadi : 1
11. Bhagavad Gita: 16-1-3

self, charitableness, subjugation of the senses, the performance of *yajnas* or sacrifice, the study of ones Veda, austerities like fasting, being the same in thought, word and deed, refraining from doing evil to others, speaking that truth which will be wholesome to other beings, freedom from anger, giving up what is productive of evil to oneself, control of the mind, refraining from tale-bearing, compassion to all creatures, freedom from desires, accessibility to the good, shamefulness at the thought of doing what is wicked, serenity of mind even when the objects of sense-pleasure are very near, never yielding to the vicious, forbearance even when injured by others, mental courage in continuing to do one's duties even in times of great adversity, the purity (of body and mind) that is necessary for the performance of such rites as are enjoined in the *s'āstra*, freedom from treachery and freedom from conceit." So also, it has been said; "Creation[12] is of two kinds:— the god-like and *āsuric*. The god like are, by nature, always full of devotion to Vishnu. The *Āsuric* are the very opposite of this." Those men with a nature like that of the gods would be tested by (our) *āchāryas* for ascertaining their real character as stated in the following *s'lokas*:— "The disciple[13] should be tested in various ways for a period of one year, or half of it, or (at least) three months and he should be taught with compassion and without any thought of gain and the like", and "If a man[19] has come by chance from a distant land with a mind full of the love of the Lord, he should be taught what he desires without any prolonged tests". (Having ascertained his fitness), the *āchārya* would reveal (spiritual truths) in such a manner that six ears could not hear them (*i. e.* that it could be heard only by the *sishya's* two ears and the *guru's* two ears and no other) and only to a disciple who had no desires and was content with what he had in regard to other things and who was keenly desirous only of learning the *s'āstras*. *Āchāryas* of olden days would guard these secrets from *āsuric* natures which are different and which have, as their possessions, such attributes as the

12 Vishnudharma: 109–74
13. Sandilya Smriti: 1-116
19. Satvata sambita: 21–45.
20. Vishnu dharma 109–74

following:— Performing [20A] *dharma* for the sake of praise, delight in the enjoyment of sense-pleasures which make one indifferent to the knowledge of what is good and what is evil, irrational arrogance, anger, harshness of speech and folly". They would keep the *s'āstra* hidden like a wealthy man who would (guard) a cherished treasure and see to its proper use:

### *THE NATURE OF THE TEACHING*:—

They would teach their *s'ishyas* such truths as the following:—

(1) *Tattva*. "There is a self or *ātmā* which is eternal and different from the body and the senses. Besides these two *viz.*, the sentient beings and non-sentient things, there is a Supreme Self who dwells within all of them as their ruler and who is the *s'eshī* (for whom they exist). Other than this Supreme Self there is no one, either oneself or others, that can protect the self". (2) *Hita*: They will also teach the means (*hita*) by which the end can be attained, in the following words to be uttered by the *s'ishya*— "From beginningless time, I have been in *samsāra* subject to the cycle of births and deaths. In order that I may not have such sufferings as dwelling within the embryo, I pray that Thou shouldst grant me Thy holy feet and save me." (With these words) and with the utterance of *Dvaya*, preceded by obeisance to the succession of *gurus*, taught graciously by the *āchāryas*, the *s'ishya* should be taught to seek the feet of Narayana and Sri and surrender his self and whatever is his, as also the burdens or responsibilities connected with them. When the good *āchārya* has thus introduced the *s'ishya* to the Lord, the *s'ishya* should be made to feel assured that the Lord would never, thereafter, forsake him so that he may live the rest of his life here in the spirit of good will to every one and free from all offence and his later life may become the prelude to *moksha*. Thus he would teach the *s'ishya* what he should do after the surrender of responsibility *(bharanyāsa)* in as brief a manner as would suit the aptitude of the *s'ishya*.

20-A. Bhagavad Gita. 16-4

*SANSKRIT SLOKA*:—

"The soul or self is different from *prakriti* or matter; greater than the self is the Saviour who is the Ruler (over all); the supreme good of man consists in the surrender of the responsibility of the self to Him; the end (attained thereby) is existence solely for the fulfilment of His purposes". In these words our spiritual teachers whose sole wealth was their compassion gave us, of their own accord, as a heritage, the (spiritual) wealth divided into three classes *(viz., tattva, hita, purushārtha)*, when we had surrendered ourselves to them.

All these words of mine on the three secrets (*mantras*) found in the earlier and later chapters) are in accordance with the spiritual tradition of *Vedānta Udayana*, otherwise called, *Madappalli āchān,* (the preceptor in charge of the kitchen), (who propagated the truths of Vedanta like Udayana commenting on *Tarkas'āstra*). Kidambi Appullar made me learn these words like a parrot, just as he had learnt them from his own *āchārya* (his father). (Therefore) these words are those that illumined his mind owing to the compassion of the Lord and that were guarded by him without forgetfulness and taught to me without any error.

*TAMIL VERSE*:—

Those lamps (of spiritual wisdom) which lighted the threshold of a certain house (in Tirukkovalur), when, of old, the cow-herd (Sri Krishna) who vouchsafed His grace (even) to cattle, came of His own accord and squeezed Himself among those three ancient singers (the first three* *ālvārs*)—Those lamps lighted there *(i.e.* their songs) dispelled the darkness of the land and revealed the path indicated in the Upanishads which form the concluding part of the four Vedas.

**NOTE*:** Peyalvar, Poygai Alvar, Bhutattalvar:

*TAMIL VERSE:—*

Our great *āchāryas*, who were absolutely free from ignorance and error, lighted this undying lamp out of compassionate grace, in the minds of worthy disciples who had grown rich in the true wealth of the performance of ordained rites in a manner which would accord with their knowledge. (They did so) because they desired that the whole world (of men) should become free from ignorance and adorn their heads with the Lord's feet owing to their longing for Paramapada.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :—*

The *āchārya* who obeys the successive commands of (the Lord who is) the first *āchārya* regulates (the minds and actions of) his *s'ishyas* by methods of instruction which *create in them noble qualities similar to those in himself and which are like irresistible waves of the celestial sea of his boundless compassion. By doing so, he saves not only the disciple but himself also under the guise of saving him.

(*NOTE: *Gunasamkramah* may mean also "which create a path for the entrance of their noble qualities into their disciples".)

## 31. THE CHAPTER ON THE DUTIES OF A *SISHYA.*

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA :—*

The *s'ishya* or disciple should be staunch in his devotion to the *guru*; he should be intent on doing such things as extending the renown (of his *guru*) (and rendering service to him); he should have the greatest regard for such things as his *guru's* property and his house, he should guard the spiritual tradition in order to hand it on to another who is worthy; the *s'ishya* who is grateful and is perfect in his performance (of the ordained rites) is he not sure to attain the treasure (*viz.*) Bhagavan ?

### *THE SERVICE RENDERED BY THE S'ISHYA TO THE GURU IS IN NO WAY A RECOMPENSE:*

The *s'āstras* say that since the *ācharya* reveals the meanings (and mysteries) of religion like one who reveals to a poor man the existence of a great treasure within his house, the *s'ishya* should feel grateful to the *āchārya*, who is the great benefactor, and never do anything against his interests. (The *s'as'tras* declare that the *s'ishya* should behave in this way) merely in order that he may not be looked upon with contempt by (those who are in) the two *vibhūtis (i. e )* this world, the *līlā vibhūti* and the region of eternal glory *(nitya vibhūti)* and by the Lord who has these (two) *vibhūtis.* (They give this advice) in order that the *(s'ishya)* may not resemble such men as Hiranya and Ravana who did evil to Prahlada and Vibhishana for giving them wholesome advice. It has been stated:— "The man[1] who steals learning (by listening to the *āchārya* without his permission and in hiding), the man who does evil to his *guru*, and the man who speaks ill of the Vedas and of the Lord who rules over all — these men, the *s'rutis* declare, should be punished at once". So when the *s'ishya* is asked to behave properly to the *guru*, it is not to say that, by doing so, he will make due requital or recompense (for what the *guru* has done

---

1- ??

to him), but that he would then avoid the evil consequences for himself (referred to above).

It is said :— "The *s'ishya*[2] should surrender his body, his property and his life-breath to his *guru*", and likewise it is said, "The *s'ishya*[3] should give his *guru* as *dakshinā* the whole of his wealth or one half of it or one fourth of it. If he is unable to do so, he should give whatever he can." These *s'lokas* state only some of the duties of the *s'ishya* like prostration *(namaskāra)* and salutation *(abhivādana)*. They do no not consider this gift as a requital or recompense to the *āchārya*, who does not expect any such return and imparts instruction merely as a matter of duty; for it is said: "The *guru*[4] should teach out of compassion and without any desire (for profit)"

When it is stated in the Vedantas that the *s'ishya* should behave towards the *guru* as towards Bhagavan (Himself) and should have as devoted an affection to the *guru* as to the Lord, when it it said, "The *s'ishya* should[5] never misbehave either with the mind or with the speech or with the body and should behave towards him as if he is not different or separate from himself" and further, "The *s'ishya*[6] should adore the *āchārya* as he does Bhagavan"—when writers like Sandilya and Apastamba say so, they do not prescribe the offer of a fee or recompense. They give the advice merely in order that the *s'ishya* who has the *s'āstra* for his eyes may not become blind of vision with eyes wide open, and in order that he, poor from his birth onward, may not lose this (blissful) experience which resembles the (blissful) experience of Bhagavan. That all this is no fee or recompense (to the *guru*) has been declared by Sandilya Bhagavan in the following *s'loka* :— "Even the[7] gods cannot make a recompense for the gift of the knowledge of God. The *s'ishya* should (therefore) give whatever lies in his power to the *āchārya* who has given him (this) instruction." When it is said "whatever lies in his power", it means

2. Vihageswara Samhita:
3. ??
4. Sandilya smriti.
5. Sandilya smriti: 1 - 118.
6. Apastamba dharma: 1 - 2 - 6 - 18.
7. Sandilya smriti: 1 - 117.

that it should be given as an outlet for his affection and regard. The *s'ishya* should, on no account, consider himself as having thereby recompensed his *guru.*

*THE DUTIES OF THE S'ISHYA :—*

The *s'ishya,* who is thus without any means of recompensing (his *guru*), should consider it his duty to behave as follows :— He should not let the instructions imparted to him become useless like water kept in a skull, by actions and observances opposed to them; for it has been said :— " Water[8] kept in a skull and milk preserved in a water-skin made of dog's leather become worthless owing to the impurity of the containers. So also does the *s'āstra* taught to one who misbehaves. The *s'ishya* should not make mere learning an end in itself, for it is said : " That *s'āstra* [9]which, having been earnt from the *āchārya,* does not lead to non-attachment (to worldly things), to the performance of *dharma* or to serenity of mind — that *s'āstra,* however beautiful in its diction and style, is as useless to the man as the cawing of a crow." He should not eat the vomit, as it were, by making the *s'āstra* which comes out of his mouth the means of his livelihood. He should not make the *s'āstra* the prostitute's adornment, the *sandal* paste *(chandana)* made only for sale, the bag of parched rice emptied in a thorough-fare, or the garland of flowers in the monkey's hands, for it has been said in ridicule :— Learned [10] men who study their subjects carefully, again and again, owing to their greed for money make their learning useful to others like prostitutes adorning their persons again and again to serve (the lusts of) others."

Learning approached the Brahmin and said, "I[11] am your wealth; guard me with care; do not give me away to those who have no liking (for me). If you guard me in this manner I shall become very powerful". As desired in those words, learning should not be betrayed into the hands of those who already clasp hate and the like in their hands.

8. Mahabharata : Santiparva; 35-42:
9. Itihasa Samucchaya: 14-43
10. ??
11. Manusmriti: 2-114

The *sishya* should clearly realise that he cannot make any recompense to the *āchārya* who has enabled him, though born blind, to become fit for the assembly of the immortals that are free from ignorance and error. As taught in the *sloka*: "The man who worships Bhagavan alone (the *ekāntin*) should, while speaking of himself, call himself the follower of Vishnu. He should never refer to himself by his village, or his family, for, to him, Bhagavan is every thing". Superior to this is the state (described by Viswamitra while addressing Dasaratha): — "This is [13]indeed befitting one who was born of a noble race and who always calls himself Vasishta's disciple. No one else would call himself so, O best of kings". The *sishya* should realise that the Saviour* Himself was born in such a family and adopted this form of referring to himself and should adopt it in his own life saying:— "You have [14]reformed me from wickedness. What requital can I make to you?"

### *THE IMPARTING OF INSTRUCTION SHOULD BE PRECEDED BY MEDITATION OF THE SUCCESSION OF GURUS:—*

When the *sishya* hands over the great wealth of the truths contained in the gist of the three mysteries (*mantras*) thus acquired by him (from his *āchārya*) to one who, as pointed out in an earlier chapter, has been found fit for it, he should impart instruction first on the succession of *āchāryas* and reveal also his gratitude (to them) and the sacredness of those truths. As an example are quoted the words of the Brahmarishi Sri Parasara to Bhagavan Maitreya:— "Brahma, born of the lotus, the grand-father of all, first gave instruction to great sages like Daksha at their request, In that same way was the instruction imparted by them to King Purukutsa on the banks of the Narbada. He handed it over to Sarasvata and by Sarasvata was it imparted to me". When the

(NOTE* Sri Rama)

12. Vishvaksena Samhita
13. Ramayana: Blakanda: 19-2
14. Tiruvoymozhi: 2-7-8
15. Vishnupurana. 1-2-8-9.

man who imparts instruction in the mysteries of the science of the soul is without a tradition and teaches (merely) on the strength of his own reading of the books or of what he over-heard from (a hiding place) behind a wall, he will, like one who wears stolen jewels be ever in dread of those that see him Moreover it may even become sinful, for it has been said :— " The *mantra*[16] which is learnt by mere chance by one in hiding, under some pretext or from books — that *mantra* will be of no avail; on the other hand, it may even cause evil ". Even when a man has learnt from a *guru* and then teaches, if he should learn and teach against the regulations enjoined for it, he would create disgust in the minds of onlookers like one who wears jewels made from the money given to him along with " *Kala* "* (These regulations) may be seen in the following *slokas* :— " Bow to the *guru*,[17] ask for explanations, render service to him and then learn the essential nature of the self ".

It is said also, "Maitreya[18] prostrated (*praṇipatya*) before Parasara and made salutations to him (*abhivādya*) ". As stated in the *sloka* :— ' He who imparts[19] instruction in violation of the regulations and he who learns violating the regulations — of these two, one will die or will come to hate the other " — as stated here, it may even have evil consequences. Even when the man has learnt according to the regulations and then teaches, if he should not render due praise to his *guru*, his *sishya* may suspect that the truths revealed by him may have no basis (or authority) like parasitic plants growing (on the branches of trees) and treat them with disregard. This omission of giving due praise to one's *guru* before one's *sishya* is included as one among the thirty-two kinds of offences. It has been stated: " The wise[20] man should reveal (the greatness of) his *guru* and guard the *mantra* with great care.

(NOTE * *Kala* When a man is dangerously ill and longs for recovery, he has the figure of a man (*Kalapurusha*) made with gingely seeds, decks it with jewels and gives it to a poor man along with money To receive such a gift is looked upon as a disgusting thing.)

16. Padmasamhita: Charyapada: 23 - 49.
17. Bhagavad Gita: 4 - 34.
18. Vishnupurana: 1 - 1 - 1.
19. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 335 - 5.
20. Sesha Samhita: 14 - 50.

By the omission to reveal (the former) and the omission to guard (the latter) respectively, a persons's wealth and term of life suffer diminution". (By this omission), the wealth of enjoying Bhagavan with clarity of knowledge and the state of mind which consists in the thought of one being a *s'esha*, which is the cause of the soul or self becoming and continuing as an entity - these two will suffer decline. If, while revealing the greatness of his *guru*, a man should contradict the teaching imparted to him by the *guru* in the *s'āstras*, he would be called a deceiver and become also a sinner, for it is said:— "He who [21]teaches astronomy, law, the *s'āstra* of expiatory rites and the science of medicine against the spirit of the respective *s'āstras* is called a *Brahmaghātaka*" or one who has committed the sin of killing a Brahmin".

If a man should fail to impart instruction to a worthy *s'ishya* at the appropriate time, he would be called a miser and incur also the sin of violating the Lord's command contained in the *s'loka* :— "One [22]should cast off one's body after imparting one's knowledge of the self to a worthy *s'ishya*. A man should not die without imparting to a worthy *s'ishya* that knowledge which is the cause of the world's being (or which is the cause of the world's knowledge)". Therefore when the king's torch-bearer is commanded by the king to go on a certain mission, he would hand over the torch in his hand to some one who is found fit for it and then start (on his mission). When a man imparts instruction in a similar manner to a pupil who is apt for it, he should first reveal (the greatness of) his *guru* and then teach the truths taught to him. Even when, owing to some (favourable) circumstances, he has received divine vision and divine auditions and learnt truths with their help, he should express the truth in the following words:— "I learnt this owing to the grace of my great *āchārya*. I am not stating what I learnt by my own cleverness". This is what (Sanjaya), for example, says:— "By the grace[23] of Vyasa did I hear, directly, this great *Yogas'āstra*, which Sri Krishna, who has wisdom and

21. Sesha dharma.
22. Poushkara.
23. Bhagavad Gita: 18 - 75.

other attributes taught in person". If he should say so, the truths that he teaches would be held in high esteem. He would (also) then be esteemed as a grateful *s'ishya* by *sātvikas*. As one who spoke the truth, he would be regarded by the Upanishads and by the Person revealed in the Upanishads as an authority having the same validity as they themselves are. His *āchārya* too, would feel gratified to find that, in this grateful and diligent *s'ishya*, his labours have borne fruit.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

He who imparted instruction in the *vidyās* or meditations that lead directly and by themselves to *moksha*—he is considered in the *s'āstras* on *moksha* as the greatest of *āchāryas*.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

The Vedas declare that a man attains *moksha* by having an *āchārya* and the same is declared in the *Smritis* also. *Āchāryas* knew that, in this world and so also, in the world beyond, the feet of the *āchārya* are the refuge (for the *s'ishya*).

*TAMIL VERSE* :—

Even (the omniscient and omnipotent) Mayan cannot requite the *āchārya* who dispelled all the darkness (in the mind) by lighting the bright lamp of wisdom therein. (Therefore) for what was received before (from the *āchārya*), it is indeed very little (that is done by the *s'ishya*) in recounting his praise with delight, in constant meditation of him, and in extending his growing renown.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA* :—

The tip of the *āchārya's* tongue shines bright being the throne on which is seated (the god) Hayagriva. So we do not consider any deity as being higher than the *āchārya*. Even Narayana plays the part of the *āchārya* without ever giving up His supreme greatness, in order to save those who are sunk in the sea of *samsāra*.

## 32. THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA* :—

There may be found some one who, by the grace of his *āchārya*, has seen (the truths concerning) the Universe (as distinctly) as if they were a jubube berry *(இலந்தைக்கனி)* in the hand, whose illusions have been dispelled and who enjoys (the meanings contained in) such mysteries *(mantras)* as the *moola-mantra*. When a worthy *s'ishya* having the necessary virtues has been found, he instructs him in the spiritual tradition and gleans, for his own observances, all that is good in the conduct and observances of great men and becomes worthy (himself) of the appreciation of the hosts of the eternal *sūris*.

*TOPICS TREATED OF SO FAR* :—

Here (in this treatise), we have set forth, just as we learnt them ourselves and just as we believe them to be true in our heart of hearts, without giving room to any ignorance, doubt or misconception, the following topics of knowledge in accordance with what is sanctioned by the *s'rutis*, the *smritis*, the *sūtras* and the ancient tradition and in accoi dance also with right reason :— (1) How the *jīvātma* whose essential nature is such that he is fit to enjoy the bliss of Bhagavan just like the *sūris* — how he has lost this fitness from beginningless time, how later he acquires the spirit of detachment (*vairāgya*) in some measure, how he comes in contact with a worthy *āchārya* from whom he begins to learn the truths and the means of attaining the ends desired by him; (2) how among the *pramāṇas* or valid sources of knowledge, the three secrets or mysteries (*mantras*), are of the greatest importance; (3) how, among the meanings revealed in these *(mantras)*, such things as the relationship of soul and body that exists between the Supreme Ruler and those which are ruled over by Him are the central and most essential doctrines to be learnt (4) how the five subjects of knowledge (*artha-panchaka*) including that relationship which have been summar-

ised by our ancient *āchāryas* are contained in the three great secrets or mysteries (*mantras*) (5) what the chief aim is of those who, among these five subjects of knowledge, devote themselves to a classification and study of the three *tattvas* or Reals (6) how among these three Reals or *tattvas*, Iswara, who is described in the *sātvika s'āstras* is the Lord with His spouse Sri (*viz.* Narayana) (7) how the man who has clearly learnt these subjects becomes eager for *mukti* and seeks the *upāyas* for *mukti* (8) the classification of those who are competent to adopt the different *upāyas*, (9) the classification of *upāyas* suitable for the competency of different individuals (10) how, among the *upāyas*, the man who wants to adopt *prapatti* as a direct and independent *upāya* should have certain characteristics or marks of competence (11) the classification of accessories enjoined as appropriate for this *upāya* which has to be performed only once (12) the nature of this important duty called the surrender of the burden or responsibility (concerning the self) with its accessories, to be performed by the man (13) how the man that has performed this *prapatti* with its *angas* has done what he ought to do, in as much as he has surrendered the responsibility to one who is the Universal Saviour (14) the signs or marks by which a man could realise that this state has been attained by him (15) how, if he is not so impatient as to pray for immediate release (by death), he should, for the rest of his life, render service (to Bhagavan and His devotees) as befitting one whose essential nature *(svarūpa)* is that of a *s'esha* (16) how the service to Bhagavan extends as far as service to His devotees (17) how this service should be rendered in accordance with the regulations prescribed in the *s'āstras*, since what is against the liking of the Master, who is the Ruler, cannot be called service (at all) (18) the ways in which or the means by which the man who has entered on his career of service in accordance with the *s'āstras* could avoid offences from being committed in future and expiate or atone for those committed in the past, (19) how the fit place for the residence of the man who is to render faultless service in times free from danger or serious adversity is the place where there are temples sacred to the Lord and which are (therefore) resorted to

By His devotees. (20) how, to the man who has been living such a life, the soul's departure from the gross body may take place, by the peculiar will of the Saviour, in any place and at any time irrespective of their being usually considered worthy or unworthy (21) how the self that has started (from the body) proceeds, like a prince invited by his father to his installation as heir-apparent, in full glory to travel along the *archirādi route* to Paramapada, (22) how after reaching there, the self will have the full and perfect enjoyment of Bhagavan which will include also free and voluntary service or *kainkarya* and which is the supreme state of Lordship reserved for the *mukta* (23) the *Siddhopāya* which is the most important of what are to be known (24) the *sādhyopāya* which is the most important of those things that are to be performed (25) and (26) the ways in which misconceptions arising from impure food, from association (with undesirable persons) as also from the character of the *yuga* and the like should be removed, misconceptions in regard to the potency of this *upāya* in relation to the man who has adopted it, misconceptions which describe its potency as higher or lower than what is stated in the *sāstras* (27, 28 & 29) the construction and interpretation of the words and the sentences in the three secrets or mysteries *(mantras)* which enable a man to meditate on all these points, (30) the regulations in regard to the imparting of instruction and the refraining from it, which have to be kept in mind by the *āchārya* who has to propagate a knowledge of the spiritual tradition concerning these truths in accordance with the *s'āstras* and (31) the duties expected of the *s'ishya* who, on account of his inability to recompense his *āchārya* adequately has to remain eternally indebted to him —

### *THE GOOD RESULTS THAT WILL FOLLOW FROM A STUDY OF THIS TREATISE:—*

The *s'ishya* should, at first, approach the good *āchārya* in the proper manner and beg of him in these words:— "I am your[1] pupil and have sought you (for guidance). (Therefore) command

1. Bhagavad Gita: 2–7.

me as to what I should do". He should listen (to the *āchārya's* discourse) with reverence and close attention and should also glean with care the advice which would supplement (what is taught by the *āchārya*) as stated in the following *s'loka* :— "One should[2] observe the wise words of great men and their virtuous ways of life and glean from them whatever is required for oneself, in the same way as some live on the grain gleaned in the fields." He should try to have a clear understanding of what is taught therein by repeated study.

It has been said :— "The *dharma*[3] followed by the good is too subtle, O monkey, to be easily understood" and "There is[4] no end to arguments. The Vedas are diverse; the *rishis* from whose words truth could be ascertained are many. The truth regarding *dharma* is hid (as it were) in a cave." and also, "*Dharma*[5] is more subtle than the sharp edge of a razor. Who is there competent to declare what it is?" Thus where even sages have to tread with the greatest care, we have to follow what is stated in the following *s'lokas* :— "The way that is followed by great men is the way (to be followed by others)" and "Whatever[6] is said, even in sport, by Brahmins seated in the chariot of the *dharma s'āstras* and armed with the sword of the Vedas — (Whatever is said by them) is considered as supreme *dharma*". Therefore to walk along the path followed by the ancient *āchāryas* who depended solely on the *s'rutis* and the *smritis* and cleared the way so that it may be free from hindrances — to walk along this way is not improper for us. To those who walk along this path, there will be no such painful anxieties as those felt by great sages when they said :— "There is[7] no rest house, no staff for support, no food (on the route) and no one to guide us. It is the path which leads to hell and is too dark to walk along. How will you

2. Mahabharata : Udyoga parva : 34-34.
3. Ramayana: Kishkindhakanda : 18-15.
4. Mahabharata : Aranyaparva : 314-119.
5. Mahabharata: Udyogaparva: 35-29
6. Bodhayana Grihyasutra 14 - 1 - 7
7. Mahabharata: Santiparva : 337-34

traverse it alone?" and "The path [8]leading to the house of Yama where there is no water for quenching the thirst, no staff for support, no shade to sit under, no house or lodge to rest in and which produces prolonged suffering." To one who follows the track of great men, there would be no such painful paths. They need not be tossed about to and fro like cotton cleaned of its seeds, combed, and carded before being spun and go up and come down, like the bucket in a picotah, along the path of smoke *(dhūmādi route)** described in the *Panchagni vidyā* in the sixth chapter of *Chāndogya upanishad.*

It has been said :— "O Lord,[9] Thou playest, as with balls, with creatures bound by the strings of *karma* and going up and coming down". To the man who follows the ways of great men, the state when he is thus a toy for the sport of Bhagavan will soon pass away. He will then go along a path which is superior to the paths followed by others to attain high ends ( like *svarga*), because it will lead to an end or goal greater than all others and will never result in a return to *samsāra.* It has been said :— "I know[10] that the path which will be trodden by the man who has exclusive devotion to Bhagavan is far superior to others" and likewise, "He ( the[11] *jīva* ) starts from the body by an excellent path, which is so cool as to remove the sufferings of *samsāra.*" and further, "To those [12]who have practised *yoga*, (all) sufferings will cease and they will then journey by the Devayana route." This excellent path will terminate in the region (Paramapada) described in the following *s'lokas* :— "It is a [13]splendid region on reaching which the self will become (itself), (*i. e.*) free from *avidyā* and consequently from suffering." "The abode[14] of the Supreme Being, Vishnu, shines far more than the sun or the fire. It is so daz-

NOTE* Going up to *svarga* and coming down to this world of *somsara* after the fruits of good deeds have been enjoyed there and repeating this process.

8. Vangipuram Nambi: Nityam-24
9. Seshadharma.
10. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 358-6.
11. Mahabharata: Santi parva: 194-27
12. ??
13. Mahabharata: Santi parva 196-11.
14. Mahabharata: Aranya parva 136-13.

zlingly bright that even the gods and *asuras* cannot gaze at it." "Those great souls[15] who have completed their practice of *yoga* and have become free from ignorance and illusion reach that region from which there is no return to this world of *samsāra*." "When compared[16] with the region where the Supreme Being abides, this *svarga* and other worlds are, my child, like hells". This path *(Devayāna)* will terminate in *Paramapada* which is declared in the *s'rutis* also as the ultimate terminus of the route leading away from *samsāra*. The self (that takes that path) will have, for its supporting staff, the grace of Bhagavan, and will have, for the victuals of its journey, the delight in the thought that it will (soon) attain the supreme end of life. As stated in the *Brahma-sūtras* "He will start[17] from there by the opening of the vein (*nādī*) indicated and lighted by the Lord who dwells within the heart" and take the *archirādi* route along which, in the respective regions of the gods, he would be greeted and welcomed with honours befitting emperors by the respective deities thereof with auspicious lamps and pitchers full of water *(poorṇakumbha)* and attended by their followers. They will escort the self on its path and those deities to whom the man made offerings in the world of *karma* before will (now) pay tributes to his self. The self then passes into regions which are beyond their range and attains a supreme perfection which would make it difficult for it to be distinguished from the eternal *sūris* when it enters their assembly. The self will then reach under the two feet of the Supreme Ruler and His consort who are resting on a couch in Paramapada, the like of which has been described in the *Mahābhārata* and the *Rāmāyaṇa* in connection with the *avatārs* as their manner of being seated :— "Then he saw Sri Krishna seated[18] on a throne made of gold and adorned with gems and looking like a blue cloud resting on Mount Meru. His form was radiant and adorned with ornaments of unsurpassed brilliance ; he was dressed in a raiment of gold and shone like a blue gem set in gold ; on his chest shone the gem *kaustubha* and

15. Mahabharata : Aranya parva 136-23.
16. Mahabharata : Santi parva 196-6.
17. Brahma Sutras : 4-2-16.
18, Mahabharata : Santi parva : 44 (13 - 16).

He was like a mountain lighted up by the sun and had a crown on His head. Such was His appearance that, in all the three worlds, there could be found no one to be set in comparison with him?" and "Sumantra, the[19] charioteer, saw Sri Rama seated like Kubera on a throne made of gold and having a beautiful coverlet His body was covered with the paste of sandal red like the blood of the boar, pure, fragrant and of superior quality. Sita was standing by him with a *chāmara* in her hand. like the star Chitra near the moon. His splendour was like that of the sun. Sumantra, who knew the etiquette (suited to courts), bowed with respect to the invincible Sri Rama who ever gave what was asked of him." (Having reached the feet of the Supreme Being), the self will receive the privilege of rendering all kinds of service suited to all places, all times and all circumstances and be for ever blissful as prayed for in the verse :— "We should render,[20] constantly and without intermission, service to the Lord — such service as will be most appropriate to all times, to all places and to all occasions".

Thus (both) in the state of endeavour (*upāya*) and in the state of attainment, the holy feet of Narayana, the Lord of Sri, are our support.

*TAMIL VERSE :*

The feet of Sri Ranganatha, ever true to their devotees can never be given up; they were once awake to the danger from a mighty wheel (the form taken by an *asura*) and by touching it they made it break (into pieces); on another occasion, they crawled on all fours and caused the two *Maruda* trees which grew close to each other to fall down; on the occasion of His searching (for butter) in the pots hanging from above, they stood indistinguishable from the mortar to which they were bound (by Yasoda), (On a later day), they gladly consented to go on the mission assigned to them by the virtuous Dharmaputra; they came to Brindavan

**19. Ramayana : Ayodhya Kanda : 16 - (8 - 11).**

**20. Tiruvoymozhi : 3 - 3 - 1.**

to bring about the destruction of the wicked *asuras*; while gently stroked by the hand of Lakshmi, they became red like the petals of the lotus; they were favourable to the devotion shown by the great sages who wanted freedom form the bondage of births; they rested in a wonderful *vimāna* (having a resemblance to *praṇava*), which was an object of worship to kings of the race of Manu; they shone in the chariot of the righteous Arjuna during the great war; they were inflamed with wrath when they danced on the cruel hoods of the serpent, Kaliya, and made them break down; they rested in a region (*Paramapada*) that could not be (even) imagined by the six systems of philosophical thought; they became the subjects of praise in the tongue of the Alvar (Nammalvar), who was the glory of the beautiful city of Kurugai; they had, for ornaments, the fragrant flowers of Tulasi; they showed their glory by graciously transforming the fallen piece of charcoal into a child (Parikshit); they chased the armies of the *asuras* to their destruction.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:—*

Imbibe the nectar of spiritual tradition which has come down from the Udayana of Vedanta (Kidambi Achan) which is fragrant with the odours streaming forth from the kitchen of the prince of *sannyāsins* (Sri Ramanuja) and fit to be enjoyed by the assembly of learned men (also gods).

(NOTE: Kidambi Achan, the disciple of Sri Ramanuja, was in charge of the kitchen during his *acharya's* life-time)

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA:*

When its sprouts which were relished by quails and which are (said to be) the arrows of the god Kama are vomited by such animals as feed on margosa leaves, the mango tree does not feel aggrieved.

*TAMIL VERSE:*

Of what avail is anger towards those Vedic scholars who teach the knowledge which they have of the truths, and the way of cast-

ing off illusions and errors, as also the nature of the self (as the *s'esha* of the Lord), the unique compassion of the Lord shown to those who are destitute of *upāyas*, and the carefree state arising from holding on to the Lord as a refuge as taught in the three mysteries *(mantras)*? We have spoken (thus far) to those who can appreciate excellence.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:—

Our youth has been spent in the enjoyment resulting from repetitions of the words of that prince of Sannyasins (Sri Ramanuja). Our days have been lived in happiness by casting off the hell of depending on any others (than the Lord); the arrogance of those who are perverse has also been annihilated for the satisfaction of good men; and for the rest of our life, we shall be earnestly and constantly looking up to the realisation of the vow of compassion taken by that divine couple for the fulfilment of whose purposes alone we exist.

*TAMIL VERSE*:—

These thirty-two Tamil verses, which, when recited, are like nectar to the ears (that hear them), which explain clearly the truths that lie deep within the four Vedas the like of which cannot be seen elsewhere and which became possible only owing to the compassion of those *āchāryas* who delight, of their own accord, to impart instruction to *s'ishyas*, when they find in them integrity of character and freedom from faults like envy — these thirty-two verses form an ornament to this treatise by virtue of these three qualities *viz.*, their beautiful diction, their wealth of ideas and their fitness for being sung.

*SANSKRIT S'LOKA*:—

There will be found some one (or other) who has faith in religion, who is keen of intellect and (at the same time) free from envy, whose mind has become pure by following the righteous tradition of good men, whose aim is to attain the highest goal, who

is not afraid of conventional judgments and who would look upon wealth and worldly success as if they were mere trash — He will certainly follow the virtuous path (which is described in this treatise) and which will never become obsolete.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

Those who have faith in the truths revealed in the Vedas, who have keenness of intellect, who would never think of speaking in depreciation of real merit, whose minds have become pure by the training which they have received from their *gurus*, who have lofty aims, who, being firm of mind, would never swerve from the right path owing to the fear of perverted judgements and who would never care for what is worthless — these men will enter the righteous path which will never become obsolete and which has been indicated by our pure-minded *āchāryas* who had more forbearance than even the Earth.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

"Our *āchāryas* will say :— "This is the right path" and will look upon (this treatise) as being delicious like nectar; they can show how the pleasures of the senses are mean and are different from the righteous way (that is described in this treatise). Owing to their desire that the path indicated here should prevail, they will overlook any mistakes of ours that may be found (in the book). We have, by the grace of our *āchāryas*, accepted this as the proper way.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

I was so ignorant that I did not know even *that eight and two make ten*;* Our Madhava who is eager to bestow on us Paramapada, which is most difficult of access, has taught me (through the *āchāryas*) the *mantra* of eight syllables and the other two *mantras* (*Dvaya* and *Charama s'loka*). By His brilliant and noble speech

(*NOTE: it may mean also 'I did not know the *Dvaya* (the two) nor did I know the *Ashtakshara* (the eight).

saying : " I will see to the absolution of all your sins ; Do not be afraid "—By these words I have attained the state of staunch faith.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

These states of mind in regard to one's essential nature, the *upāyas* and the end to be attained (which are explained in this treatise) and which are understood only with effort by even those who are in *Paramapada* are indeed possible of attainment even here in this world of *samsāra.* This treatise, though decried by perverse minds bent (only) on finding faults, will be found sweet by the Supreme Ruler whose lotus-like feet overflow with honey.

*TAMIL VERSE :—*

The Lord whose face resembles that of a white horse (Hayagriva) assumed the form of my *āchārya* and, by that device, wrote these truths in my mind and I have (only) transcribed them on these leaves. The part played by me is none other than this. Whether this treatise is accepted as worthy or rejected as unworthy, my clear mind, O men of critical minds, will feel neither elated nor depressed in the least.

*SANSKRIT SLOKA :—*

This treatise, "The Gist of the Three *Mantras* or Mysteries" was composed in brief by the wise Venkatesa endowed with manifold vision, to the satisfaction of those who look upon Sri Narayana and His consort as the only Saviours.

*Here ends the fourth part called " The path of Spiritual Tradition."*



# ERRATA

The reader is requested to make these corrections before reading the book.

| Page | Line | For | Read |
|---|---|---|---|
| INTRODUCTION : | | | |
| V | Last line | reverance | reverence |
| VII | 25 | *S'araṇāgati panchās'at* | *S'araṇāgati deepikā* |
| X | 13 | Visistadvaita | Visishtadvaita |
| XIX | 5 | imcomparable | incomparable |
| ,, | 8 | *vibhuti* | *vibhūti* |
| ,, | 17 | - do - | - do - |
| ,, | 25 | has exhibits | exhibits |
| XX | Lines 6 & 7 from below | *s'ārīra-s'ārīri-bhāva* | *s'arīra s'arīribhāva* |
| XXII | 25 | Southen | Southern |
| XXIV | 22 | *vibhava lokās* | *vibhava-lokas* |
| ,, | ,, | *vyūha lokās* | *vyūha lokas* |
| ,, | 25 | *vyuha* | *vyūha* |
| TEXT : | | | |
| 13 | 18 | and *hita* | and *hita* ( |
| 18 | 26 | latter | later |
| 25 | 24 | Shine | Thine |
| 50 | 12 | actively | activity |
| ,, | 18 | *tamas*). Time | *tamas)*, Time |
| 55 | Footnote | *Visistadvaitinms* | *Visishtadvaitins* |
| 77 | 6 | are others like the | are, like others, the |
| 108 | 4 | that felt | the yearning felt |

| Page | Line | For | Read |
|---|---|---|---|
| 155 | 5 | qulities | qualities |
| 163 | Footnote | 11. Amlanadipiran | Amalanadipiran |
| 170 | 20 | a queen who | a queen, who |
| ,, | 21 | unworthy would | unworthy, would |
| 174 | 1 | give the delight | give Thee delight |
| 183 | 16 | life? | life. |
| 220 | 4 | tome | some |
| 261 | 25 | which says | which say |
| 278 | 5 | *mukti* | *mukta* |
| 310 | Footnote | Tirumali | Tirumalai |
| 328 | 4 | *bhakti* on *prapatti* | *bhakti* or *prapatti* |
| 331 | 5 | *charma s'loka* | *charama s'loka* |
| 333 | 9 | *Bramā pralaya* | *Brahmā pralaya* |
| 343 | 7 | furtune | fortune |
| 352 | Last line | praying for | desire for |
| 358 | Footnote | page | page 256 |
| 360 | 15 - 20 | After the word "following" - insert "as stated in the *Tattvasāgarasamhitā* and the like" and delete these words after *tattvas* or reals in line 20. | |
| 361 | 19 | *s'abdha* | *s'abda* |
| 365 | Footnote | pharse | phrase |
| 413 | 10 | ear | fear |
| 417 | 6 | — that in the body brought | — that in the body, that brought |
| ,, | 25 | They ere | They are |
| ,, | 31 | *bhayānka* | *bhayānaka* |
| 420 | 6 (Para 2) | *Kaṭṭavalli* | *Kaṭavalli* |
| 424 | 9 - 10 | insert the following after 'words' in line 9 and before '(in the *gadya*)' in line 10 :— 'I who am without any other protector. The words' | |

| Page | Line | For | Read |
|---|---|---|---|
| 435 | Note* | also | all |
| 448 | line 8 | or accessories | or accessories) |
| 459 | 6 | requirements | requirements, |
| 517 | line 2 (Para 2) | (on p. ) | (on p. 447) |
| 531 | 1 | of which are both of the nature of *karma* of and | which are of the nature of *karma* and |
| 548*Note | 5 | those | only those |
| ,, ,, | 6 | and the like | and the like take this route |